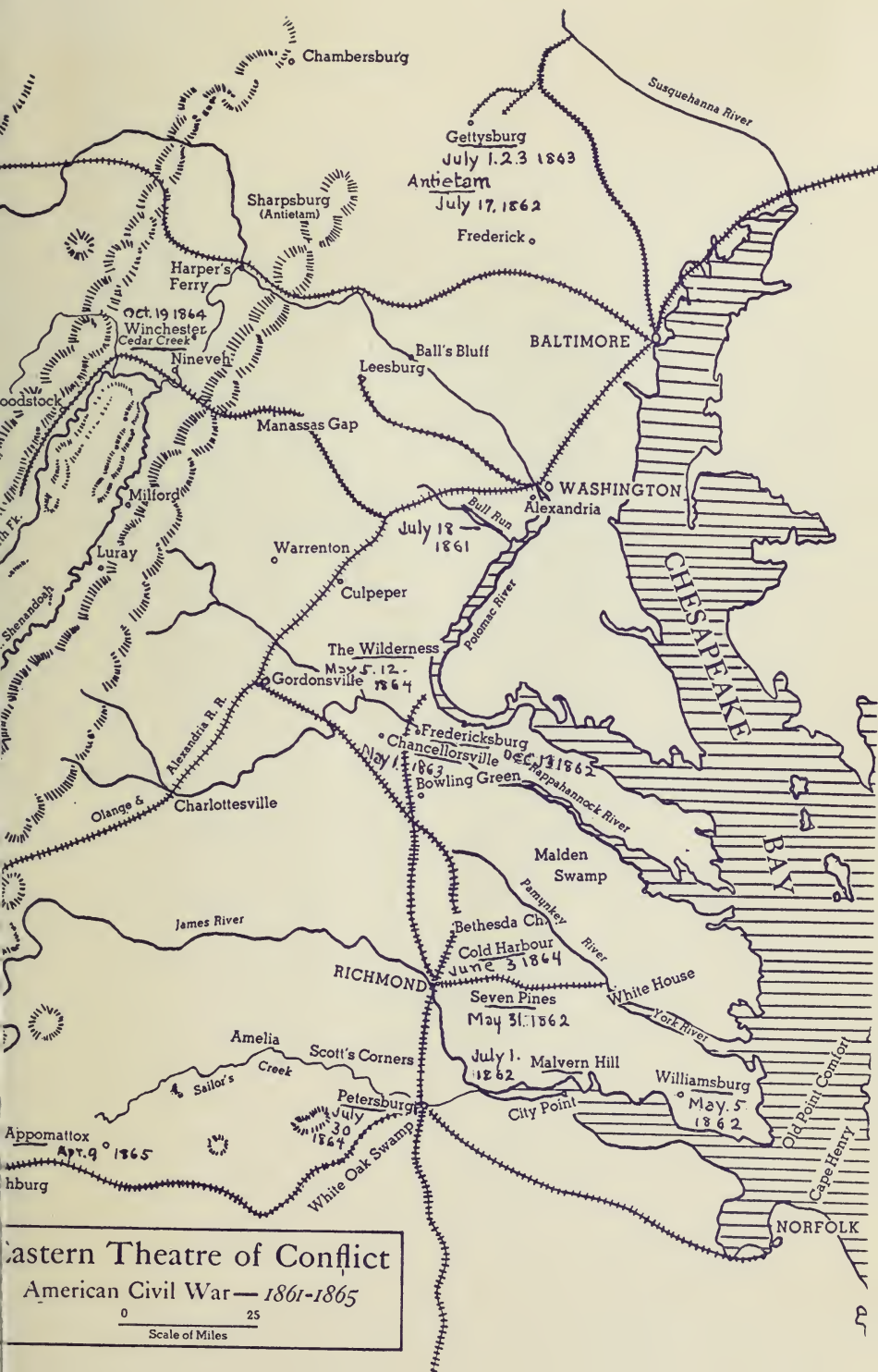
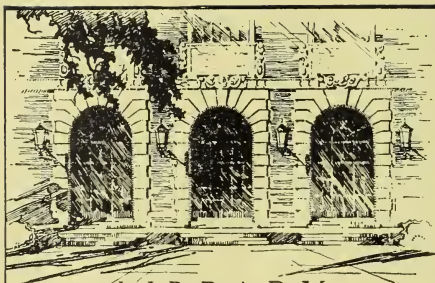


Western Theatre  
of Conflict  
American Civil War  
1861-1865

0 35  
Scale of Miles





LIBRARY  
OF THE  
UNIVERSITY  
OF ILLINOIS

A Bequest from  
Marion D. Pratt

973.82  
G76 Wma  
cop.5

ILLINOIS HISTORY SURVEY  
LIBRARY

GRANT AND HIS GENERALS

*By the same Author:*

LINCOLN AND THE BIBLE

LINCOLN AND HIS CABINET

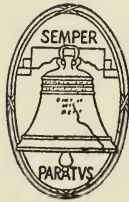
LINCOLN AND HIS GENERALS

HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS OF THE CIVIL WAR

LITTLE MAC—THE LIFE OF GENERAL GEORGE B. MCCLELLAN

GRANT  
and  
HIS GENERALS

by  
Clarence Edward Macartney



THE McBRIDE COMPANY

NEW YORK

COPYRIGHT 1953  
*by*  
THE McBRIDE COMPANY, INC.

---

FIRST EDITION

---

*Printed in the United States of America*

Published simultaneously in Canada by  
McClelland & Stewart, Ltd.

TORONTO



973.82

G 76 W, ma

Cop. 5


See Hist. Surv.

*"While I have been eminently successful in this war, in at least gaining the confidence of the public, no one feels more than I how much of this success is due to the energy, skill, and the harmonious putting forth of that energy and skill, of those whom it has been my good fortune to have occupying subordinate positions under me."*

Grant to Sherman, March 4th, 1864.

~~94056~~

of Grant's speech



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2012 with funding from  
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

<http://archive.org/details/granthisgenerals00maca>

# Contents

FOREWORD . . . . .	IX
SOURCES AND AUTHORITIES . . . . .	XII

<i>Chapter</i>	<i>Page</i>	<i>Notes</i>
I. GRANT AND THOMAS <i>W.P.</i> . . . . .	1	<i>Yes</i>
II. GRANT AND MEADE <i>W.P.</i> . . . . .	30	<i>Yes +</i>
— III. GRANT AND MCPHERSON <i>W.P.</i> . . . . .	53	
— IV. GRANT AND RAWLINS <i>No.</i> . . . . .	75	
— V. GRANT AND LOGAN <i>No.</i> . . . . .	99	
— VI. GRANT AND SHERIDAN <i>W.P.</i> . . . . .	110	
— VII. GRANT AND WILSON <i>W.P.</i> . . . . .	132	<i>No.</i>
VIII. GRANT AND HALLECK <i>W.P.</i> . . . . .	148	
— IX. GRANT AND BUTLER <i>No.</i> . . . . .	166	
— X. GRANT AND SMITH <i>W.P.</i> . . . . .	189	<i>No.</i>
— XI. GRANT AND MCCLEARNAND <i>No.</i> . . . . .	223	
XII. GRANT AND BURNSIDE <i>W.P.</i> . . . . .	245	<i>Yes</i>
— XIII. GRANT AND SHERMAN <i>W.P.</i> . . . . .	267	<i>No.</i>
XIV. GRANT AND HIS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF . . . . .	303	
INDEX . . . . .	343	



## Foreword

In the last years of the Civil War, Grant, as general-in-chief, commanded all the officers of the Union Army. He had also the unusual experience of commanding in actual battle almost all the high officers of the Union Army. The list includes three commanders of the Army of the Potomac: Burnside, Hooker and Meade; two commanders of the Army of the Cumberland: Rosecrans and Thomas; McPherson and Howard, who commanded the Army of the Tennessee, and Sherman, who commanded three armies in his march through Georgia; and in addition to these, most of the leading corps and division commanders of both the western and eastern armies. It is this fact which makes the story of Grant and his captains of such importance and interest.

Sherman, who knew Grant better than any of the officers of high rank who served under him, confessed that to him Grant remained a mystery:

“He is a strange character. Nothing like it is portrayed by Plutarch or the many who have striven to portray the great men of ancient or modern times. I knew him as a cadet at West Point, as a lieutenant of the Fourth Infantry, as a citizen of St. Louis, and as a growing general all through the bloody Civil War. Yet to me he is a mystery, and I believe he is a mystery to himself.”

Grant confessed that his success was such a mystery to himself, for he told John Russell Young on his trip around the world, “You can never tell what makes a general.” Certainly, he owed nothing of his success to McClellan and Halleck, his superior officers in the early part of the war. Neither did he owe much to his assistants. On his staff he had a few able military men, such as McPherson and Wilson, but on the whole it was as Dana described it, “a curious mixture of good, bad, and indifferent, a

mosaic of accidental elements and family friends." Grant was at times the victim of a dangerous and disabling habit. He hesitated to act firmly in his dealings with his subordinates lest he hurt their feelings, and on one occasion was undoubtedly cowed and browbeaten by General Benjamin Butler. There were times when his mind lay torpid. Yet, despite these defects, he went from one victory to another.

Grant's Civil War career is a bright parenthesis in a long paragraph of failure. He failed as an officer in the old army; not indeed in the Mexican War itself, but thereafter, when he left the army under a cloud. He failed as a farmer; as a real-estate agent; in the opinion of many, as a President; and as a banker. But from Belmont to Appomattox, meeting and defeating one after another the ablest generals the South could pit against him, from Albert Sidney Johnston to Robert E. Lee, he enjoyed an unbroken record of victory and success.

That success has puzzled many a student. How shall we account for it? Badeau, Grant's military secretary, said that neither he nor the other members of the staff knew why Grant succeeded. They believed in him "because of his success." Perhaps Sherman approached as nearly as anyone the secret; writing to Grant after he had been appointed lieutenant-general and commander of all the armies, he said: "The chief characteristic of your nature is the simple faith in success you have always manifested, which I can liken to nothing else than the faith a Christian has in his Saviour."

A great personality always embodies intangibles which elude classification and baffle definition. Undoubtedly, one of the best ways to study Grant and penetrate to the heart and mind of this in many ways inscrutable character is to regard him in the light of his personal and military association with the leading officers who labored with him.

Because of the short time they served under Grant, and their brief association with him, we have omitted from the list General Joseph E. Hooker and General William S. Rosecrans. Hooker served under Grant in the Chattanooga campaign. No love was lost between them. Grant termed Hooker's "Battle above the Clouds" on Lookout Mountain "one of the romances of the war,"

and Hooker said that Grant had "no more moral sense than a dog." Rosecrans, who commanded the Army of the Cumberland until Grant replaced him with Thomas after the defeat at Chickamauga, had been hailed by many as the North's greatest strategist. He served under Grant in the battles of Iuka and Corinth in Mississippi in 1862, and greatly displeased him by his conduct in those encounters. Like Hooker, Rosecrans despised Grant, and spoke of him as "that puppy."

Some of these thirteen captains—McClelland, Halleck, Meade and Butler—were unfriendly to Grant. One of them, "Baldy" Smith, at one time the most highly esteemed of all Grant's generals, became in the end his bitter enemy. With those subordinates who were unfriendly to him Grant was patient and forbearing. With Sherman, Sheridan and McPherson, the first three among his captains, like the "first three" of David's mighty men, and with others who loved him and whom he loved, he was kind and generous, always full of appreciation, giving them full credit, and sometimes more than they deserved, for the part they played in his victories.

I have added a chapter on "Grant and his Commander-in-Chief," for the story of Grant and his captains would not be complete without an account of his relationship with Lincoln.

A study such as this must inevitably treat of campaigns, battles, and sieges; my purpose, however, has been to probe deeper. I have been mindful of Plutarch, who prefaces his chapter on Alexander the Great with this statement: "My design is not to write histories, but lives; and the most glorious exploits do not always furnish us with the clearest discoveries of virtue or vice in men. Sometimes a matter of less moment, an expression or a jest, informs us better of their characters and inclinations than the most famous sieges, the greatest armaments, or the bloodiest battles."

CLARENCE EDWARD MACARTNEY

*January, 1953*

## Sources and Authorities

A list of all the books, government documents, manuscripts, letters, diaries, magazines, and newspapers which I have consulted and searched through during many years of study in the field of the Civil War in preparation for this book would constitute a small volume in itself. It will be more practicable to indicate the nature of the different sources and authorities.

First in importance are the government documents. Outstanding among these is the vast collection known as *The Official Records of the War of the Rebellion*, the publication of which was commenced by the government in 1881. These records are fairly complete as to the Union armies, much less so as to the Confederate. Another important official document is *The Report of the Committee of Congress on the Conduct of the War*. This violently partisan committee was appointed by Congress early in the war, and was under the chairmanship of the fiery Radical senator from Ohio, Benjamin F. Wade. Despite its character, it throws much light on the conduct of the war and on the Union generals. For example, it is particularly helpful as an aid to a study of the explosion at the Petersburg crater in 1864 and in fixing the responsibility for that débacle.

Official records, however, are not always human records. They reveal little of the hopes, fears, ambitions, sorrows, anguish, disappointments, frustrations, and triumphs of the great struggle. Fortunately, in the aftermath of no war have so many of the high officers in the armies written the story of their experiences. This is one reason why so many of the names of the generals of the Civil War are still familiar; their personalities remain undimmed. With the exception of the veterans themselves, few Americans today could name a single army commander of World War I; although it is only eight years since World War II came to an end, few could name any of the commanders of that war except General Eisenhower and perhaps the colorful Patton.



After more than eight decades, however, the names of Grant, McClellan, Sherman, Sheridan, Thomas, Butler, Meade, Custer, and McPherson are still well-known.

Of the thirteen generals whose military association with Grant I have sketched, several left memoirs or autobiographies; others, such as Wilson and Smith, have written accounts of the campaigns in which they participated.

The list of books of memoirs, recollections, autobiographies, and diaries is long and constantly growing. There are also scores of biographies of the chief personalities of the war, some written by military men and others by civilians. Very rewarding, too, is the study of recollections, diaries, and autobiographies by contemporary civilians. In this category would fall *The Education of Henry Adams* for its comments on Grant, and Lucius E. Chittenden's *Recollections of President Lincoln and his Administration*. As a reference for Grant's conversations and his appraisals of his generals, nothing can surpass John Russell Young's *Around the World with General Grant*. Among other important sources are the many careful histories written by such men as Adam Badeau, who was on Grant's staff, and William Swinton's *Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac*. Swinton was the war correspondent who was caught eavesdropping near Grant's headquarters and was drummed out of the army by General Meade; his *History of the Army of the Potomac* is one of the best that has been written.

Still another rich field is to be found in the long list of unpublished manuscripts, letters, diaries and other personal papers, many of which repose in the historical libraries of America; new collections come to light periodically. My search through these manuscripts and papers has led me from the Vermont State Historical Library at Montpelier, to the Huntington Library in California; in addition, many days were spent examining the great collections in the manuscript division of the Library of Congress. I have found the Washburne papers and Grant's letters to his wife, in the Chicago Historical Society, of great assistance. In the Illinois State Historical Society I located a manuscript biography of General John A. McClernand by an unknown author.

A short time before his death, I had the privilege of a conver-

sation with the late Oliver Barrett, in whose notable collection I found the letters written to General Rawlins, Grant's chief of staff, by his second wife, Mary Hurlbut. The letters of Rawlins in the Chicago Historical Society were also helpful.

In his *Life of General William F. Smith*, General James H. Wilson refers to certain papers and an unfinished autobiography, of which he seems to have made little or no use. I had despaired of locating these papers when, through a friend in Philadelphia, where General Smith was residing at the time of his death, I learned that his son, Captain Stuart Farrar Smith, who had served in the navy in World Wars I and II, was living in Washington, D. C. A short time before Captain Smith's death I sought him out, and he placed at my disposal all of his father's papers and letters and the manuscript autobiography. These documents throw important, new light on the strange story of Grant, Ben Butler, and "Baldy" Smith, perhaps the ablest general in either army.

I have carefully scanned the newspapers of the Civil War period, and in these contemporary journals have encountered narratives and incidents not related elsewhere. The magazines, both contemporary and post-bellum, are always worth the historian's search.

In the early period of my study of the Civil War I had the privilege of conversing with many survivors of the great conflict. That, of course, is not now possible, for the Civil War began ninety-two years ago; even a boy of fifteen—and a few of that age did manage to enlist—would now be one hundred and seven years old. I am thankful, therefore, that I was able to talk with so many of the veterans before their eyes were dim or their natural force abated. One of the greatest opportunities I had for such conversations occurred on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the battle of Gettysburg, when fifty thousand of the veterans of both the North and the South assembled on that historic field.

My studies of books, manuscripts, and official records and my talks with veterans of the war have been supplemented through the years with journeys over the chief battlefields, from the pleasant hills and meadows of Antietam and Gettysburg to the woods of Shiloh and the solitudes of Chickamauga.

**GRANT AND HIS GENERALS**



# 1

## Grant and Thomas

At the end of the first day's battle of Murfreesboro, or Stone River, on December 31st, 1862, General Rosecrans, commanding the Union Army, held a council of war. Exhausted from the exertions of the day, General Thomas fell asleep. Rosecrans awakened him and asked, "Will you protect the rear of the army on retreat?" Starting out of his slumber, Thomas exclaimed, "This army can't retreat!" and fell asleep again.

There was Thomas through and through—a man who would never retreat. Grant said of him, "He could not be driven from a point he was given to hold." The Confederate Army discovered that at Stone River and also at Chickamauga where, after the center and right wing of the Union Army had been driven from the field, the Confederate Army under Bragg tried in vain to overwhelm Thomas on Horseshoe Ridge. It was there he won his sobriquet, "The Rock of Chickamauga." The portraits of Thomas reveal the man's resemblance to a rock; he could not be moved, as Grant said, from a point he was given to hold. But neither could he be moved into action by his superior officers until he was satisfied that he was ready to fight. Grant discovered that at Missionary Ridge, and again at Nashville, where for almost two weeks he bombarded Thomas with telegrams ordering him to move out and attack the Confederate Army under Hood. Thomas refused to move until the ice had

melted and the weather was favorable. When he finally attacked, he won one of the most decisive and complete victories of the Civil War.

Grant and Thomas resembled each other in certain respects. If one covers the upper part of their photographs, one notes a marked similarity in mouth and jaw. Both were determined men; both were imperturbable in the crisis of battle; neither ever contemplated retreat in the face of an enemy. Both scorned excitement and both abominated profanity. Here, however, the similarity ends. Although Grant was silent and reticent, men did not feel ill at ease in his presence; by contrast, the cold manner of Thomas sometimes made intercourse awkward. Piatt, one of his officers, said of him: "His deep thoughtful eyes, heavy brows and firm chin made one feel as if he were gazing into the mouth of a cannon, and the cannon said nothing."

Ordinarily slow in speech, except in battle, Grant was quick in action. Thomas was ponderous, cautious, deliberate, and lacked imagination. His friends in the army observed that he was "too slow to move and too brave to run away." In appearance Grant was unimpressive and commonplace, whereas Thomas, with his granite countenance and massive frame, was dignified and imposing. Grant won the loyalty and affection of officers in close touch with him, but he never won the affection of his troops as Thomas did. To his soldiers he was always "Pap Thomas." In one of his battles he observed a man who was displaying great coolness and courage under fire; going over to him, Thomas shook him by the hand and thanked him for his gallant conduct. Much embarrassed, the man stood in silence for a moment, and then exclaimed, "General Thomas shook that hand. If any fellow ever tries to take it, I'll knock him down!"

Friends of Thomas claim that in his presence Grant was ill at ease and embarrassed, as if he recognized in his subordinate a man of stronger and loftier character. Perhaps some of the difficulties which arose between the two men were due to this fact. Thomas undoubtedly failed to

reciprocate Grant's kindly feelings. In 1869 a Dr. J. S. Hale wrote to Thomas in regard to some post, asking him to speak on his behalf to Grant. Thomas replied, "I could not possibly have any influence, because General Grant is not a friend of mine and would not be disposed to accommodate me in any way, if public opinion did not compel him to do so."

Like most men of stern and severe exterior, Thomas occasionally showed great tenderness of heart. After the war he and his antagonist at Nashville, General Hood, chanced to stop at the same hotel. A mutual friend went to his room to inquire whether Thomas would like to meet Hood. Thomas at once said it would be a pleasure for him to do so and asked, "Would he come here to my room?" Soon he heard the sound of Hood's crutches coming along the corridor; when Hood appeared, Thomas threw his arm around him and helped to seat him with great gentleness and tenderness. After an hour's conversation Hood left Thomas's room and, meeting the friend who had arranged their interview, said to her with tears in his eyes and in his voice: "Thomas is a grand man. He should have remained with us, where he would have been appreciated and loved."

Of the three most distinguished southern-born officers to stand by the Union, one was the most famous living soldier of his country; the others were to gain great fame in the war. They were General Winfield F. Scott, General-in-Chief of the Army; Admiral David Farragut, the hero of New Orleans and Mobile Bay; and General Thomas. The outbreak of war compelled Thomas, born in Virginia, to make a difficult choice; his decision was to put the nation above his state. While Scott, Farragut, and Thomas made their decision, Lee still vacillated. "By the water courses" of the Potomac and in the shadows of the Corinthian columns of Lee's stately mansion on the heights at Arlington "there were great searchings of heart." Many of the southern leaders had strong convictions as to the sacredness of what they called "States' Rights." Lee, however, entertained no such ideas. He detested secession, deprecated war, said he

“could not realize that our people will destroy the government inaugurated by the blood and wisdom of our fathers,” and “wished for no other flag than the Star Spangled Banner and no other air than *Hail Columbia*.” Lee realized, too, the great odds against the South in the coming war, and from the very beginning saw that a military victory for the Confederacy was impossible. Just before the surrender at Appomattox, John S. Wise, son of Governor Wise of Virginia, who had gone with Jefferson Davis and the Confederate government to North Carolina, arrived at Lee’s headquarters with a message from Davis. He brought him tidings, too, of the defeat of Ewell at Sailor’s Creek. Speaking more to himself than to others, according to Wise, Lee ejaculated, “A few more Sailor’s Creeks and it will be all over—ended—just as I expected it would end from the first.”

On August 17th, 1861, Thomas was appointed Brigadier-General of Volunteers. He owed this appointment to the friendship and recommendation of Sherman, his old friend and West Point classmate. At a conference with the President held at the Willard Hotel in Washington, Sherman suggested Thomas as one of the new brigadier-generals. Lincoln remarked that Thomas was Virginia-born and that there were doubts as to his loyalty. Sherman protested earnestly against the accusation, saying: “Mr. President, old Tom is as loyal as I am, and as a soldier he is superior to all on your list.” Lincoln then said, “Will you be responsible for him?” To this Sherman replied without hesitation, “With the greatest pleasure.” The President then promised to send his name with the others to the Senate for confirmation. In the afternoon of the same day Sherman visited the Senate to see his brother John, who represented Ohio, and learned that all the names on the list of brigadier-generals, including that of Thomas, had been confirmed. Sherman belatedly realized that he had become responsible for a man as brigadier-general whom he had seen only once in twenty years. Becoming somewhat anxious, Sherman inquired at the War Department for Thomas’s current assignment; finding that he was stationed in Maryland, some eight



or ten miles from the city, Sherman ordered a carriage and drove as rapidly as he could to the general's headquarters. When he arrived, Thomas was in the saddle superintending some movement of the troops. For hours on the sultry afternoon, and hardly able to control his impatience, Sherman awaited his return. Coppee, Thomas's biographer, reports the conversation as Thomas L. James gave Sherman's version of it many years later. After their first greetings had been exchanged, Sherman said to his West Point classmate, "Tom, you are a brigadier-general." "I don't know of anyone," replied Thomas, "that I would rather hear such news from than you." "But," said Sherman, "there are some stories, Tom, about your loyalty. How are you going?" "Billy," Thomas answered, "I am going south." "My God!" exclaimed Sherman. "Tom, you have put me in an awful position. I have become responsible for your loyalty." "How so?" said Thomas. Sherman then related to him his conversation with Lincoln. When he had finished, Thomas leaned back and said, "Give yourself no trouble, Billy; I am going south, but at the head of my men."

The course pursued by prominent southern-born officers who resigned their commissions in the United States Army and joined the Confederacy has been ardently defended and highly praised by southern and English historians, notably by Henderson in his *Life Of Stonewall Jackson*, as the only decision they could have made with honor. But what of officers like Scott, Farragut, and Thomas, who put their nation above their state? Were they not also men of honor? Certainly they were men of high and rare moral courage. Lee's decision was a most difficult one. Announcing his resignation, Lee wrote to Scott: "It would have been presented at once, but for the struggle it has cost me to separate myself from the service to which I have devoted all the best years of my life and all the ability I possess." Lee's love for his country, the old flag, and the old army were all involved. He had inherited, too, a great tradition of military service to the nation through his illustrious father, Light Horse Harry Lee, who had played an important part in the

establishment of the Republic. Moreover, he must have been troubled by the thought that inevitably his military talent would be diverted to the support of slavery and secession, to both of which he was opposed. On the other side was his long and close family association with the Old Dominion. It was an equally difficult decision for a man like Thomas. Happily, the question of conflicting loyalties to state and to nation is one which can never rise to plague us again; it has been decided forever on a hundred bloody battlefields.

What it cost Thomas to stand by the Union is indicated by the following incident. When Thomas was commanding the Army of the Cumberland at Chattanooga, he received a letter addressed to a Confederate officer with the request that he deliver it within the Confederate lines. As it was a harmless message, Thomas sent the letter to General Bragg, commanding the Confederate Army, requesting him to forward it to the officer to whom it was addressed. Thomas knew Bragg well. He had served with him in Florida and was an officer in Bragg's battery in the Mexican War. Bragg regarded him highly and had recommended him for a post as instructor in artillery at West Point. According to Sherman, in a short time the letter Thomas had sent to Bragg came back under a flag of truce with this note: "Respectfully returned to General Thomas. General Bragg declines to have any intercourse or dealings with a man who has betrayed his State." General Thomas paid an even greater price because he chose to serve the Union instead of the Confederacy. When he cast his lot with the United States Army, his own sisters in Virginia henceforth looked upon him as one dead.<sup>1</sup>

Grant and Thomas had known one another at West Point, where Thomas preceded Grant by three years. They

---

<sup>1</sup> This is in striking contrast with the attitude of Stonewall Jackson's sister, who characterized her brother as "a moral coward" because, being opposed to both slavery and secession, he nevertheless fought with the Confederate Army. This is based upon a statement made to the author by the late Arthur Dayton, the distinguished Charleston, West Virginia, lawyer who, in his early days at Philippi, West Virginia, was well acquainted with Mrs. Laura Arnold, Jackson's sister.

had served together in the Mexican War, but their first meeting in the Civil War occurred during the Shiloh campaign in April of 1862. Thomas's division of Buell's Army of the Ohio, which came to the rescue of Grant, did not arrive in time to take part in the second day's battle, when the united forces of Grant and Buell drove the Confederates from the ground they had won in the first day's fight. After Shiloh, General Halleck, commanding in the Mississippi Valley, came to the front in person. His large army was now composed of Grant's Army of the Tennessee, Buell's Army of the Ohio, and Pope's Army of the Mississippi. Grant nominally was second in command under Halleck; but in reality he was, as he himself put it, "only an observer" and was ignored by Halleck. In his depression and discouragement he planned to leave the army, and was dissuaded only by the timely and eloquent plea of Sherman. During the advance on Corinth, most of the troops of Grant's Army of the Tennessee were put under Thomas, on the right wing of the army. Both General James H. Wilson, of Grant's staff, and Charles A. Dana thought that the ill feeling between Thomas and Grant had its origin in that Corinth campaign, when Thomas, who belonged to another army, was given command of nearly all Grant's troops.

Thomas was with Buell's army in the campaign against Bragg in Kentucky. Buell's march toward Louisville created dissatisfaction in the War Department, and on September 29th Thomas was ordered to supersede Buell in command of the Army of the Ohio. The army was then on the eve of the battle of Perryville, and Thomas, with noble self-abnegation and magnanimity, telegraphed the War Department asking that the order be suspended. A month later the high-minded and capable Buell was replaced by Rosecrans. Thomas was offended at this, and expressed his mortification to Halleck. Halleck reminded him that he had declined the command of the army on a previous occasion. However, in order to soothe the feelings of Thomas, the President antedated Rosecrans's commission so that he was made senior, and Thomas served

him loyally until he was replaced after the battle of Chickamauga.

Thomas commanded the Fourteenth Army Corps in the bloody battle of Stone River, which was fought on December 31st, 1862 and January 2nd, 1863. At Stone River the right wing of the Union Army under McCook was driven back into the rear of the Union left flank; only the heroic resistance of the center corps under Thomas saved the day. Up to the time of the battle of Chickamauga, Thomas was apparently the only general who perceived that Bragg's evacuation of Chattanooga was only temporary, and that there was great danger in such a wide separation of the different corps of the Union Army as McCook's division from Thomas by a distance of forty miles.

Rosecrans had barely time to unite his army before Bragg turned and struck in the woods and ravines of Chickamauga. The first day's battle on September 19th ended without decisive advantage to either side. But the next day, Longstreet's veteran corps, which had been detached from Lee's army in Virginia, smashed through the Union lines and swept the Union right under McCook and the center under Crittenden off the field. The victorious Confederates, thirsting for complete victory, then turned nearly all their forces on Thomas, who was posted on the Union left on a range of hills called Horseshoe Ridge. Against this position Longstreet's Confederate veterans of Antietam and Gettysburg flung themselves in furious and repeated, but vain, charges. Perhaps never again during the war did the Confederate soldier fight with the same dash and impetuosity with which he charged the lines held by Thomas on that September afternoon. After Chickamauga he still fought with desperation, but with the spirit of a man who, despairing of victory, was determined to die in harness.

On the evening of the 20th of September, after Rosecrans's army had been swept back into the defenses of Chattanooga, Charles A. Dana, who was with Rosecrans as a representative of the War Department, sent this message to Stanton; "My report today is of deplorable importance.

Chickamauga is as fatal a name in our history as Bull Run." The heroic stand made by Thomas on the Union left flank rendered the situation better than Dana considered it when he communicated with Stanton. It was, nevertheless, sufficiently perilous. In great alarm, the government at Washington ordered Grant, then at Vicksburg, to report at Cairo. When he reached Cairo on October 3rd, he was ordered to proceed to the Galt House at Louisville to meet an officer of the War Department. At Indianapolis, on his circuitous journey to Louisville, he met the "officer from the War Department." He was none other than the Secretary of War, Stanton.

On the trip from Indianapolis down to Louisville, Stanton assigned Grant to the command of the Military Division of the Mississippi and gave him two alternative orders. One order left the army commanders undisturbed, with Rosecrans still at the head of the Army of the Cumberland at Chattanooga; the other assigned Thomas to the command of the Chattanooga army. Grant at once chose the second order. He had not been happy in his relationship with Rosecrans whom he commanded in the battles at Iuka and Corinth after the Shiloh campaign. He had found him insubordinate and impatient with direction and now had no hesitation in replacing him.

After they had arranged matters, Stanton went to bed, and Grant to the theater. Emerging from the theater, he met messengers from Stanton who urged his immediate return. Reproaching himself for relaxing at a critical time, Grant hurried to Stanton's room to find the Secretary pacing up and down in his night shirt and in great agitation. He had just read a telegram from Charles A. Dana, the Assistant Secretary of War with the army at Chattanooga, saying that Rosecrans had ordered his army to retreat. Grant immediately sent a dispatch relieving Rosecrans of the command and directed Thomas to take command of the army, exhorting him to hold his position at all hazards. Thomas sent back the laconic reply, "We will hold the town until we starve." Rosecrans, who was with Thomas when Grant's

telegram arrived, said that both he and Thomas were highly indignant at the message and regarded it as one that only ignorance or malice could have inspired.

The recommendation of Charles A. Dana, the special representative of the War Department at the front, played no small part in the replacement of Rosecrans. Dana had telegraphed Stanton recommending Thomas's succession. In reply, Stanton wired Dana: "I wish you to go directly to see General Thomas and say to him that his services, his abilities, his character, his unselfishness have always been most cordially appreciated by me, and that it is not my fault that he has not long since had command of an independent army." Dana, immediately went to Thomas's headquarters and read him this message. Greatly moved, Thomas said:

"Mr. Dana, I wish you would say to the Secretary of War that I am greatly affected by this expression of his confidence. I should have long since liked to have had an independent command; but what I should have desired would have been the command of an army that I myself could have organized, disciplined, distributed, and combined. I wish you would add also that I would not like to take the command of an army where I should be exposed to the implication of having intrigued, or of having exercised any effort to supplant my previous commander."

When Grant had been hastily summoned from Vicksburg to Chattanooga, he was still suffering from a fall from his horse which occurred in New Orleans. On his way over the mountains from Nashville to Chattanooga his horse had slipped coming down the mountain bridle path, and the fall further injured his lame leg. On reaching Chattanooga he had to be lifted from his horse. He went at once to Thomas's headquarters. He was hungry, soaked with the rain, and suffering from his bruised leg. Thomas received him, but did nothing to relieve his discomfort. When General James H. Wilson arrived he found the two generals seated on the opposite sides of a blazing wood fire, both of them glowering at the flames, and both silent and grave. Under Grant's chair was a puddle of water that had run out of his rain-drenched

clothes and from which clouds of steam were now rising. Rawlins, Grant's chief of staff with whom Wilson had shaken hands as he entered the room, was white with anger at the reception Grant and his staff had received. After a moment's conference with Rawlins, Wilson said to Thomas: "General Thomas, General Grant is wet, hungry and in pain. His wagons and camp equipage are far behind. Can you not find quarters and some dry clothes for him, and direct your officers to provide his party with supper?" This brought Thomas to himself, and he at once asked Grant to step into a bedroom and change his clothes. Grant thanked him, but quite positively declined to accept the invitation. He then lighted a fresh cigar and drew his chair up a little nearer to the fire, so he could thrust his feet forward and give his top boots a chance to dry. This strange incivility on the part of Thomas that night seriously affected the subsequent relations of the two generals. Grant was kind, gentle, and hospitable; but, however slow to suspect discourtesy or incivility from anyone, he could hardly have failed to perceive it on this night. According to Porter and Wilson, his jealous chief of staff never forgot or forgave the incivility of Thomas at that first meeting between the two men.

Thomas, by the account of those who knew him intimately, was one of the noblest and purest characters of the war. How shall we account for the discourtesy which he showed to Grant on that night when they first met at Chattanooga? It was all the more strange, because it was to Grant that Thomas owed his present position as commander of the Army of the Cumberland. One thing to be remembered is that Thomas undoubtedly felt himself capable, as he probably was, of handling the situation at Chattanooga without any assistance from Grant. Although he was now commander of the Army of the Cumberland, his position, with Grant at the front, was more like that of an executive officer, just as Meade was at the head of the Army of the Potomac, but with Grant directing its movements. We must remember also that Thomas's record in the old army was much more distinguished than that of Grant; and in the war

then raging he had a record for solid achievement at Mill Springs, Stone River, and Chickamauga that was second to none. Grant had been under a cloud at the time Thomas was first associated with him in the campaign against Corinth; no doubt Thomas shared the opinion of many, in and out of the army, that Grant was a man of careless habits who had strangely come to the front by good fortune rather than by the display of great ability.

As the campaign to relieve the situation at Chattanooga and drive back Bragg's army opened, Thomas's strong but stubborn nature soon became a cause of irritation to Grant. General Burnside was besieged at Knoxville by Longstreet. The government was greatly concerned about this; in order to relieve the pressure on Burnside, Grant gave Thomas peremptory orders to attack the north end of Missionary Ridge and from there to threaten and, if possible, attack Bragg's line of communications. As soon as he received this order from Grant, Thomas went to the able Chief Engineer of the Army, General W. F. ("Baldy") Smith, and besought him to have the order revoked, saying that if he made the attack his army would be terribly beaten. Smith, Thomas, and Brannon, the Chief of Artillery, made a careful reconnaissance of the field; this convinced them that their half-starved horses could not draw the field artillery, that Thomas did not have sufficient men to carry out the proposed assault, and that they should await the arrival of Sherman's column. They so reported to Grant, who countermanded his order. In his own comment on this incident Grant said:

"I ordered Thomas peremptorily to attack the enemy's right so as to force the return of the troops that have gone up the valley . . . But he persisted in the declaration that he could not move a single piece of artillery and could not see how he could possibly comply with the order. Nothing was left to be done but to answer Washington dispatches as best I could, urge Sherman forward, and encourage Burnside to hold on."

Grant was greatly disappointed by Thomas's refusal to carry out his orders; however, unless he removed Thomas



from his post, he could only await Thomas's declaration that he was ready.

On November 25th, 1863, the day of the famous charge up Missionary Ridge, Grant stood on Orchard Knob with Thomas, Gordon Granger, whose troops made the charge, and other officers observing the operations. The Confederate batteries on Missionary Ridge had found the range of Orchard Knob, and their shells were bursting not far from where the generals stood; everybody except Grant and Thomas and Granger sought cover. Granger had requisitioned a cannon, which he would load with the help of a soldier and then fire at the Confederate lines. This disgusted Rawlins and angered Grant.

Sheridan's and Wood's division of Granger's corps had been lying under arms since early morning, ready to attack the moment the signal was given; nevertheless, action was delayed. The day was wearing away, and Grant's face was clouded with anxiety and impatience. Thomas was gloomy and silent, while Granger amused himself by firing his cannon against the Confederate batteries. Smith, Rawlins, and Wilson consulted to break this deadlock and decided to suggest a demonstration from the center of the Union line against the Confederate entrenchments at the foot of Missionary Ridge; Rawlins was chosen to urge this movement upon Grant. He approached Grant and in a low voice made the suggestion. Grant then walked over to Thomas, standing quite near him, and said, "Don't you think it is about time to order your troops to advance against the enemy's first line of rifle pits?" Thomas made no reply, but kept looking through his field glasses, scanning the enemy's position on Missionary Ridge. As time passed with no action, Grant turned to Thomas to inquire the cause of the delay. He was surprised to see General Thomas J. Wood, commander of one of the two divisions which were to make the charge, standing talking to Thomas. When Grant asked Wood why he had not charged as ordered an hour before, he replied that this was the first he had heard of the order, that he had been ready all day to move at a moment's notice. It

was quite evident that Thomas was determined to run the battle to suit himself.

General Smith, who stood near Grant and Thomas during the battle, has reported that during this long delay General James H. Wilson went over to Rawlins and said: "If I'd given an order to Thomas an hour ago to move, I would know the reason why the order had not been obeyed." With an oath Rawlins replied, "I will see what can be done." He then went over to General Grant and, with more oaths, repeated Wilson's statement. Grant made no reply to Rawlins, but turned to Wood, who was standing near, and said, "Why are you not with your division? I gave orders for it to move an hour ago." Wilson characterized Grant's reluctance to give Thomas a peremptory order as "a moral timidity that is rather pitiful to behold, when we take into consideration the stakes for which we were playing and the cost in life of a mistake."

Finally, at 3 o'clock, and after earnest pleading on the part of Rawlins, Grant took action. Now thoroughly aroused, he turned to Thomas, and with an expression of unusual determination, his face blazing with anger, said: "General Thomas, order Granger to turn that battery over to its proper commander and take command of his own corps. And now order your troops to advance and take the enemy's first line of rifle pits." In a few minutes loud cheering indicated that Sheridan and Wood were driving the Confederates before them toward Missionary Ridge. The plan was for the troops to take only the rifle pits at the foot of Missionary Ridge, but in the enthusiasm of the first success, the troops stormed up the side of the mountain to the very crest, driving the Confederates before them. The color bearers rushed in front and the soldiers followed them.

As Grant stood watching Sheridan's and Wood's troops swarm up the summit of Missionary Ridge, one of the grandest spectacles of the war, he turned to Thomas and said, "By whose order is this?" The imperturbable Thomas replied, "By their own, I fancy." This was undeniably true. In the uncontrollable excitement and enthusiasm of their

first success at the rifle pits the soldiers themselves had taken over the management of the battle. Chickamauga was avenged. Under Grant's victorious touch, not only the Mississippi, but now the Tennessee "flowed unvexed to the sea."

Grant was probably somewhat disappointed that the battle of Chattanooga, although resulting in so great a victory, did not work out according to his plan, for now the glory of that day fell to Thomas and the Army of the Cumberland, rather than to Sherman and the Army of the Tennessee. According to Badeau, when Grant had summoned Sherman from Vicksburg, he wrote him: "I hope you will be in time to aid in giving the rebels the worst, or best, thrashing they have had in the war." They did get the "worst thrashing" they had received in the war up to that time; but it was Thomas, not Sherman, who administered the punishment. General Hooker, who commanded the troops on Grant's right, quoted Grant as saying after the victory had been won: "Damn the battle! I had nothing to do with it."

The battle of Chattanooga has been described by some as Grant's masterpiece, the skillful maneuver of an army in the presence of the enemy; it has been said that no battle of the war was fought and won so completely according to the plan laid down before the encounter. But this was not the opinion of such officers as General James H. Wilson, careful historian as well as distinguished soldier, who was then on Grant's staff, nor of General W. F. Smith, Chief Engineer of the Army of the Cumberland, who helped to plan the battle and who laid the pontoon bridge over the Tennessee by which Sherman's army crossed to take part in the battle. Grant's orders to Thomas were that he was to "co-operate with Sherman", who was expected to deliver the decisive blow to Bragg's army. But it is to be remembered that Grant ordered Thomas to make the assault on Missionary Ridge for only two reasons: (1) because of the difficulties encountered by Sherman and the slight success which attended his attack on the right wing of the Confederate Army on the 24th; and (2) the erroneous impression received by Grant

and Sherman that Bragg was withdrawing troops from his center and concentrating them against Sherman, thus weakening his own line at the center and inviting attack. Van Horne reports that, when Grant issued that order at 3:30 in the afternoon, he said to the members of his staff, "We must do something for Sherman." Thus, what began purely as diversionary movement to relieve Sherman culminated in a great victory.<sup>1</sup>

In Sherman's campaign from Chattanooga to Atlanta in the Spring of 1864, more than half of his forces were under the command of Thomas, who headed the Army of the Cumberland. When word was brought to Sherman that General Joseph E. Johnston had been replaced as commander of the Confederate Army by General John B. Hood, Sherman said to General Schofield, who had handed him an Atlanta newspaper with that information: "Schofield, do you know Hood? What sort of a fellow is he?" Schofield, who had been Hood's classmate at West Point, answered: "Yes, I know him well; and I will tell you the sort of man he is. He'll hit you like hell now, before you know it."

The next day, July 19th, Hood lived up to the reputation given him by Schofield by hurling his army against Sherman in the furious assaults of the battle of Peach Tree Creek. Unable to drive Sherman back or to save Atlanta, Hood removed to a place of safety the thirty-four thousand Federal prisoners held in the terrible stockade at Andersonville and turned westward to attack Sherman's line of communications. By this move he hoped to divide Sherman's army and avoid a further invasion of Georgia. Sherman followed him as far back as Snake Creek Gap, where he had been five months before, but still kept his grip on Atlanta. Then he made the bold decision to cut loose from Atlanta, march to the sea, and then northward to join Grant. To cope with Hood's invasion of Tennessee, Sherman selected Thomas and sent him back to Nashville, together with Schofield, who had commanded the Army of

---

<sup>1</sup> Van Horne, *Life of Thomas*, P. 184.

the Ohio. Thomas disliked the assignment, and thought the whole plan inherently dangerous; he believed that, instead of marching with his army across Georgia to the sea, Sherman should order Wilson and his cavalry to devastate the state. Badeau reports that he telegraphed Sherman on September 18th: "I don't wish to be in command of the defenses of Tennessee, unless you and the authorities at Washington deem it absolutely necessary."

Hood's invasion of Tennessee was well-planned and vigorously prosecuted; if it failed of its objective, it was only because of the lack of resources in men and material. On parting with General J. B. Cox, who was leaving to join the forces in Tennessee, Sherman said to him, "If there is to be any hard fighting, you will have it to do." The prediction was accurate: Sherman's march through Georgia to the sea was a parade and a picnic; the hard fighting was in Tennessee.

Hood crossed the Tennessee River below Mussel Shoals, near Florence, Alabama, with forty thousand men. His plan was to seize Nashville and make it the base for an invasion of Kentucky. In case that succeeded, he intended to take his army through the mountains and attack the rear of Grant's army in Virginia. General John M. Schofield, with most of Thomas's fighting force, had been sent forward from Nashville to feel out Hood and slow down his advance, while Thomas recruited his army at Nashville. Hood's advance was very rapid, and on November 30th at Franklin, twenty miles south of Nashville, he made contact with Schofield's army drawn up in the hills around that town. The battle which ensued on that late November day was, for the time of its duration, little more than one hour of daylight, the bloodiest of the war. The Confederate generals, aroused to a pitch of desperation to uphold their faltering cause, led their men in furious charges against the strong Union positions. However violent the battle, the losses were almost all on one side. Schofield lost only 189 men killed, whereas two thousand of Hood's army perished; among the casualties was Patrick Cleburne, one

of the ablest Confederate division commanders in the West. Schofield fought this battle without any help or direction from Thomas, except the general instructions he had received to feel out and retard the march of Hood's army. A more daring and dynamic commander than Thomas would have reinforced Schofield and destroyed Hood's army on the spot; that was the opinion of both Grant and Sherman. "Thomas," said Grant, "made no effort to re-enforce Schofield at Franklin, as it seemed to me at the time he should have done, and fight out the battle there." After Thomas's victory at Nashville, Sherman telegraphed Grant: "Why he did not turn on him at Franklin, after checking and discomfiting him, surpasses my understanding."

Schofield himself later said that "a fight to the finish then and there might quite probably have given us the prize." It was difficult, however, for a commander to determine at midnight the exact results of the desperate battle which had just been fought; moreover, in anticipation of orders from General Thomas to fall back to Nashville that night, the army trains had already been ordered to the rear to clear the way for the march of the troops. Lastly, Schofield's ammunition had been almost exhausted. He had accomplished the objective of checking Hood for which his army had been sent into the field, and his junction with the reinforced army of Thomas at Nashville was now assured.

Schofield later wrote:

"Why run any further risk? If it had been possible for me at that moment of supreme satisfaction to have had any thought of self, I might perhaps have considered the project of turning upon my adversary at dawn the next morning in the hope of routing his dispirited army. But if any man thinks such a thought possible under such circumstances, he knows nothing about the character of a patriotic soldier."

There is every reason to believe that, had he remained and fought the next day, he would have destroyed Hood's army. Thus the glory that devolved on Thomas for the victory two weeks later at Nashville would have fallen to Schofield.

Nevertheless, to Schofield belongs no little of the credit for the subsequent victory over Hood's army on the hills around Nashville. That struggle was child's play compared with the savage and sanguinary one-hour battle at Franklin; it was there that Hood's army was broken and its spirit destroyed. His further advance upon Nashville was a desperate gamble with no reasonable hope of success. When the sun went down on that 30th of November over the hills at Franklin, strewn with the dead and wounded of Hood's army, the invasion of Tennessee and Kentucky was over.

Leaving his dead and wounded behind him at Franklin, Hood followed Schofield's withdrawing army and, with a brave but hollow show of waving banners and massed bands playing the Confederate airs, entrenched himself on the hills around Nashville. The period which intervened until Thomas finally struck on December 15th was one of great apprehension and distress for Grant and the authorities at Washington. Grant was fearful that Hood would bypass Nashville, cross into Kentucky, and make it necessary to send a large force of troops from the East to check his advance. Daily, and on some days almost hourly, Grant telegraphed Thomas ordering him to move out and attack Hood's army. But Thomas, who could not be moved by the attacks of an enemy, was equally determined in his resistance to Grant's instructions. He was unwilling to make the attack until the weather was propitious and Wilson's cavalry was in shape. Stanton and Halleck also joined in the bombardment of Thomas. "Thomas," Stanton wired Grant on December 7th, "seems unwilling to attack because it is hazardous, as if all war was anything but hazardous. If he waits for Wilson to get ready, Gabriel will be blowing his last horn."

Grant's telegrams to Thomas commenced December 2nd, two days after the battle of Franklin, and continued through December 15th, the day of the battle of Nashville. In his first message, Grant chastised Thomas for not taking the offensive against Hood immediately after the latter's repulse at Franklin. He confessed that from City Point, Virginia, a considerable distance from the field of operations, he

"might err as to the best method of dealing with the enemy," but warned Thomas that he would suffer great injury upon his railroads and communications if Hood were not speedily destroyed. Two days later he telegraphed him, "Attack Hood at once and wait no longer for a remnant of your cavalry." The following day Grant wired Stanton: "You probably saw my order to Thomas to attack. If he does not do it promptly, I would recommend superseding him by Schofield, leaving Thomas subordinate."

On December 8th Grant wired Halleck: "If Thomas has not struck yet, he ought to be ordered to hand over his command to Schofield. There is no better man to repel an attack than Thomas. But I fear he is too cautious to ever take the initiative." In response to this message from Grant, Halleck wired Grant, five hours later: "If you wish General Thomas relieved from command, give the order. No one here will, I think, interfere. The responsibility, however, will be yours, as no one here so far as I am informed, wishes General Thomas' removal." Here Halleck was running true to form, evading responsibility where he could. Both he and Stanton had expressed great dissatisfaction with the inactivity of Thomas; but if Thomas were to be removed, Halleck wished the whole responsibility to be placed on Grant's shoulders where, indeed, it belonged. But Thomas was so beloved by his soldiers, and was so great a hero with the country because of his stand at Chickamauga, that both Grant and the War Department hesitated to remove him from his command.

Having already ordered Thomas to attack, Grant now tried coaxing and persuasion. In his telegram, sent at 8:30 P.M. on December 8th, Grant told him: "Now is one of the finest opportunities ever presented of destroying one of the three armies of the enemy. If destroyed, he can never replace it. Use the means at your command, and you can do this and cause a rejoicing that will resound from one end of the land to the other." On the morning of that same day Halleck had sent a message to Thomas telling him that Grant was greatly dissatisfied at his delay in attacking the



enemy. "If you wait till General Wilson mounts all his cavalry, you will wait till Doomsday."

The following day, Thomas sent a message to Grant telling him that when he had practically completed his preparation to attack Hood, there had come a terrible storm of freezing rain, and that he would have to wait until the ice melted on the hills. Then he added: "Major-General Halleck informs me that you are very much dissatisfied with my delay in attacking. I can only say I have done all in my power to prepare, and if you should deem it necessary to relieve me, I shall submit without a murmur." At 11 o'clock on that same day, Grant had directed Halleck to telegraph orders relieving Thomas and placing Schofield in command. That afternoon Halleck replied to Grant, saying the orders for relieving Thomas had been made out, and that if Grant still wished the orders telegraphed to Nashville, they would be forwarded. But in the meantime Grant had received the message from Thomas explaining his situation. This caused his anger to subside a little, and he sent Thomas a friendly message, in which he said:

"I have as much confidence in your conducting a battle rightly as I have in any other officer. But it has seemed to me that you have been slow, and I have had no explanation of affairs to convince me otherwise. Receiving your dispatch of 2 P.M. to General Halleck before I did the one to me, I telegraphed to suspend the order relieving you until we should hear further. I hope most sincerely that there will be no necessity of repeating the order, and that the facts will show that you have been right all the time."

In his dispatch to General Halleck suspending the order for the relief of Thomas, Grant said: "I am very unwilling to do injustice to an officer who has done so much good service as General Thomas has and will therefore suspend the order relieving him until it is seen whether he will do anything." The last phrase of that dispatch to Halleck would indicate that Grant still doubted that Thomas would move in time to defeat Hood's army.

December 11th came without word of the attack by Thomas. At 4 o'clock on that day Grant wired him: "If you delay attack longer, the mortifying spectacle will be witnessed of a rebel army moving for the Ohio River, and you will be forced to act, accepting such weather as you find . . . Delay no longer for weather reinforcements." Greatly disturbed by Grant's complaining dispatches, Thomas called a meeting of his corps commanders on the night of the 10th of December, and asked them to state their opinion as to the feasibility of carrying out Grant's urgent orders to fight at once. General James H. Wilson, commander of the cavalry, spoke first, and gave it as his opinion that to attack when the ground was covered with a glare of ice would jeopardize the chances of success. If they waited until a thaw came, success was certain. He expressed his confidence that, were he occupying Hood's lines under the same circumstances, he could defeat the whole attacking army with his dismounted cavalrymen, each armed with nothing more dangerous than a basket of bricks.

The other corps commanders, especially Schofield, the victor of Franklin, expressed their approval of Thomas's determination not to fight until he was ready. When the conference broke up that night, Thomas said to his cavalry commander:

"Wilson, they [Grant and the War Department] treat me as though I were a boy and incapable of planning a campaign or fighting a battle. If they will let me alone, I will fight this battle just as soon as it can be done, and will surely win it. But I will not throw the victory away, nor sacrifice the brave men of this army by moving until the thaw begins. I will surrender my command without a murmur if they wish it, but I will not act against my judgment when I know I am right."

With the threat of removal hanging over him, Thomas went calmly ahead with his preparations. His officers described him, however, as being greatly troubled in spirit; when the rain was falling and the fields and roads were ice-bound, he would sit by the window for an hour or more,

“not speaking a word, gazing steadily out upon the forbidding prospect, as if he were trying to will the storm away.” But at length the long-hoped for thaw came, and on the evening of December 14th, having completed his plans and outlined them to his corps commanders, Thomas telegraphed Halleck, “The ice having melted away today, the enemy will be attacked tomorrow morning.” He then gave orders to his staff officers to be ready at 5 o’clock in the morning and, greatly relieved, went to his bed. On the morning of the 15th reveille sounded in the Federal camps at 4 o’clock, and at 6 o’clock all was ready. Thomas packed his valise, handed it to his orderly, paid his bill at the St. Cloud Hotel, and mounted his horse to ride to the front.

At 11 o’clock that day the War Department at Washington received this dispatch from Thomas: “I attacked the enemy’s left this morning and drove it from the river below the city very nearly to the Franklin Pike, a distance about 8 miles. Have captured General Palmer’s headquarters and train, and a second train of about 20 wagons, with between 800 and 1,000 prisoners and 16 pieces of artillery.” This was the first of the tidings of a great victory. In the battle on the 15th and the 16th, and in the pursuit of the next few days, thirteen thousand prisoners and seventy-two cannon were taken. It was the only important battle of the war in which one of the contending armies was completely broken up and destroyed. More prisoners were taken than after any victory up to that time, with the exception of Donelson and Vicksburg. The left flank of the Confederacy had been crushed, and the great pincer movement of Grant and Sherman could now proceed until the fate of the Confederacy was sealed. The ease with which Thomas won the victory would seem to substantiate the opinion of Grant that he could have attacked Hood successfully long before. Horne recalls that Hood had under him at Nashville only twenty-three thousand men, whereas Thomas had seventy thousand present.

Thomas himself recognized the fact that Hood’s army was in a desperate condition, but he was convinced that the

longer he waited, the worse the plight of that army would become. To a company of his officers who were praising him after the battle for his masterly generalship at Nashville, Piatt reports that Thomas said:

“Gentlemen, you award more praise than I deserve. The government at Washington and the general before Richmond could not know what we knew, that the Confederate army was demoralized, and that the longer we held them at bay the weaker they became. While we at Nashville were comfortable, sheltered, well fed, and gaining every day in strength, poor Hood and his ragged, badly supplied men were lying out on the bleak hills about the place, being continually thinned out by sickness and desertion.”

Grant was fair, both to Thomas and to himself, when in his General Report of the operations of all the armies in the last year of the war he said:

“I am not yet satisfied but that General Thomas, immediately upon the approach of Hood before Nashville, and before he had time to fortify, should have moved out with his whole force and given him battle, instead of waiting to remount his cavalry, which delayed him until the inclemency of the weather made it impracticable to attack earlier than he did. But his final defeat of Hood was so complete that it will be accepted as a vindication of that distinguished officer’s judgment.”

The modest Thomas afterwards regretted that he did not detach a force at the close of the first day’s fighting and send it into the rear of Hood’s broken army. He felt that had he done so, he would have captured nearly all of Hood’s men. “A general,” he said, “must take some risks, and Hood’s army ought all to have been captured.” Thomas was a great soldier, but not one who “took risks,” as most great commanders have done.

Thomas was greatly stirred by his victory. In the gloom of the evening of the second day’s battle, General James H. Wilson, whose cavalry had played so great a part in the victory, was moving down the Granny White Pike in

pursuit of Hood when he heard the thunder of horses' hoofs on the macadam road behind him. He at once thought that it must be Thomas galloping to overtake him. When he reined up his horse and pulled to the side of the road, a heavy horseman came up abreast of him and called out, "Is that you, Wilson?" Wilson instantly recognized the voice, and replied, "Yes, General Thomas." The words were no more out of his mouth than Thomas shouted in a voice that rang out through the darkness and might have been heard a quarter of a mile away, "Dang it to hell, Wilson, didn't I tell you we could lick 'em! Didn't I tell you we could lick 'em!" Then, wheeling his horse about and calling to Wilson to continue the pursuit as far as he could that night and the next morning, Thomas galloped away in the night for Nashville.

Thomas was as silent and reserved in battle as he was out of it. Schofield relates that during the first day's battle on December 15th, he and Thomas sat together on horseback just to the rear of the Union lines, where they could overlook the entire field. Now and then Thomas would reach for Schofield's glasses and peer through the mists to the point where his infantry and cavalry were advancing against the left of Hood's army. All those hours he hardly spoke to Schofield. But late in the afternoon, after a final look through the field glasses, he said with great energy, "Smith has not reached far enough to the right. Put in your troops!" Now and then a shell exploded near the two generals, causing Thomas's mount to start slightly, but only slightly, for the horse seemed to share the imperturbable nature of his rider. The only reaction of Thomas when a shell burst and his horse shied was a slight motion of the bridle hand to check the animal.

The ice melted just in time to save Thomas from dismissal from his command on the eve of a great victory. In his distress of mind, fearful that Hood would escape Thomas or, still worse, invade Kentucky, Grant had ordered General John A. Logan, who happened to be on a visit to army headquarters at City Point, to proceed to

Nashville and relieve Thomas. He was not, however, to deliver the order or publish it until he reached Nashville. He was not to deliver the order at all if Thomas had moved in the meantime, but was to communicate with Grant by telegraph. When he had gone as far as Cincinnati, Logan sent one of his staff to Thomas at Nashville with the copy of Grant's order, but magnanimously urged Thomas to make the attack so that a change of commanders would not be necessary. Then he went on to Louisville, where he heard of the great victory which made it unnecessary for him to proceed further.

After Logan had started for Nashville, Grant became so uneasy over the situation that he decided to go himself. He took a steamer to Washington, where he arrived on the evening of the 15th and had a conference with Lincoln, Stanton, and Halleck. Grant informed the President of his anxiety about the delay of Thomas in attacking Hood, and of his intention to relieve him and place Logan in command of his army. Lincoln observed that, since Thomas was one of the most cautious of the generals, it might be that his judgment on the ground was better than that of those who were hundreds of miles away, and that it might be well to wait for more evidence that his judgment was wrong before removing him. Grant replied that they could not afford to wait longer when the consequences of a possible defeat were so disastrous, and that Thomas, while a very able officer, was habitually slow, and this time was slower than ever. According to Gustavus Fox, Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Lincoln rejoined: "But has he not always 'got there' in time? Some generals have been in such haste that they had to move in the wrong direction. General Thomas acquired my confidence in April, 1861, and he has ever since retained it."

From the White House Grant went to a room at Willard's Hotel to prepare for the journey to Nashville by special train. But at 11 o'clock that night he received word that Thomas at last had moved and crushed the left wing of Hood's army. Turning to a friend, Grant took his

cigar from his lips and said quietly, "I guess we'll not go after all." To Thomas he telegraphed: "I was just on my way to Nashville, but receiving a dispatch from Van Duzer detailing your splendid success of today, I shall go no farther. Push the enemy now, and give him no rest until he is entirely destroyed." Three days later he telegraphed Thomas, "The armies operating against Richmond have fired 200 guns in honor of your great victory."

In spite of the great news from Thomas, Grant was not yet quite ready to recommend his promotion to major-general in the Regular Army. He wanted to be sure that Thomas was vigorously pursuing the beaten Confederate Army. On the 19th of December Stanton had proposed to confer on Thomas the one post vacant in the Regular Army. But Grant replied: "I think Thomas has won the major-generalcy, but I would wait a few days before giving it, to see the extent of damage done." Badeau reports that, on the 23rd of the month, when Grant was satisfied that Thomas had inflicted great injury on Hood, he said to Stanton: "I think it would be appropriate now to confer on General Thomas the vacant major-generalcy in the Regular Army. He seems to be pushing Hood with energy, and I doubt not he will completely destroy that army." The appointment was made the next day.

In the first report he made of the Nashville campaign and the operations of the year, Grant wrote a lengthy criticism of Thomas, explaining his reasons for giving orders for his removal. But afterwards, unwilling to censure a general who had done so well for his country, he suppressed it. Thomas, like Meade, felt deeply hurt when Grant, after becoming President, appointed General Sheridan to the rank of Lieutenant-General of the Army to succeed Sherman, who had taken Grant's place as General of the Army. He felt, and with good reason, that he had suffered injustice by Sheridan's promotion. Sherman felt that Congress should have provided by law for three lieutenant-generalships for those great soldiers, Sheridan, Meade, and Thomas, and should have dated their commissions "Get-

tysburg," "Winchester," and "Nashville." In 1868 President Johnson, at the time of his dispute with the War Department, sent Thomas's name to the Senate for promotion to the brevet ranks of lieutenant-general and general; but Thomas felt that Johnson proposed to use him to displace General Grant as commander of the army. In refusing the promotion, he said that the honor was too great for his services since the war, and came as too belated a recognition of his wartime accomplishments.

In the Autumn of 1868, soon after the election of Grant as President, Thomas and Colonel Alfred L. Hough, his chief of staff, called to give their congratulations to the President-elect. Grant invited them into his library where they spent an hour together; the only others present were Grant's father and Mrs. Grant. In the midst of a general conversation, Grant suddenly said to Thomas: "Thomas, there has got to be a change on the Pacific coast, and either you or Sheridan will have to go there; how would you like it?" Thomas hesitated for a moment and then answered: "As for myself, I would have no objection to serving there, but on Mrs. Thomas' account I would not want to take her any further away from her friends in the East." Before General Grant could reply, Mrs. Grant spoke up and said: "Your having a wife is one reason why you should go there instead of Sheridan, as he ought to stay here where he can get one." At this everyone smiled, and Grant changed the trend of the conversation. When the two had left the house, Thomas turned to Hough and said: "Hough, we are going to California. That was settled tonight."

In 1869 Thomas was appointed to the command of the Military Division of the Pacific at San Francisco. After his arrival, he had just started to write an answer to a hostile article about his Nashville campaign published in *The New York Tribune*, when he suffered a fatal stroke of apoplexy. When the news reached Washington, Sherman walked over to the White House with a telegram which he handed to Grant, saying in a shaking voice, "I am afraid Old Tom is gone!" It was the opinion of Grant that the fatty de-



generation of the heart which occasioned Thomas's death had long affected him and in part accounted for his slow actions on the field of battle.

Badeau, Grant's military secretary and historian of his campaigns, summed up the character of Thomas as a general when he said: "If he had the quality of inertia, he possessed momentum as well. He was like an elephant crossing a bridge and feeling his way with ponderous feet before every step. But woe to the enemy he met on the opposite side."

One's admiration for Thomas as a man and as a stubborn, courageous fighter in the presence of the enemy makes it somewhat difficult to appraise accurately his abilities as commander of an army. He possessed to a remarkable degree, surpassed in this respect only by McClellan, the affection and confidence of his troops. That in itself is a great asset for any commander. However, as the record stands, and upon the testimony of the educated soldiers who were closely associated with him in the war, Thomas did not possess that activity of mind which is necessary in the commander of an army who must foresee and provide for all the exigencies of battle and military operations. Nevertheless, eighty-nine years after winning his victory on the hills about Nashville, Thomas, because of his noble personality and his moral qualities, remains one of the great and imposing figures of the Civil War.

## 2

### Grant and Meade

If General Meade had fallen mortally wounded on the third day at Gettysburg, just when Pickett's men were reeling backward from the furthest point of their advance at the stone fence on Cemetery Ridge, his fame would have been secure; his reputation would have been greater, perhaps, than that of any Union general, Grant and Sherman not excepted. Fate, however, was unkind to Meade; he commanded the Army of the Potomac twenty-two months too long.

In April of 1865, after the surrender at Appomattox, General Grant went to North Carolina to straighten out the difficulties which had arisen in connection with the terms of capitulation which General Sherman had offered to the Confederate Army under Joseph Johnston. Writing at that time Meade said: "I am curious to see whether Grant, when he joins him, will smother him as he did me."

That word "smother" sums up the history of Grant's relationship with Meade; it was his tragedy. He took command of the Army of the Potomac just as it was marching into position for the battle of Gettysburg, and there fought and won the greatest battle of the Civil War. Yet Meade never received the national acclaim which that great victory warranted. As lieutenant-general and general-in-chief, Grant established his headquarters with the Army of the Potomac in April of 1864 as the campaign against

Lee's army in Richmond was about to open. With that act Meade, although he retained his command of the Army of the Potomac, passed into semi-obscurity. Grant "smothered" him, not because he wanted to, but because it was inevitable that the general-in-chief who made his headquarters with the Army of the Potomac should eclipse its leader. Meade had known Grant slightly when they were both lieutenants in Zachary Taylor's campaign against Monterey. "I knew him," said Meade, "as a young man in the Mexican War, at which time he was considered a clever young officer, but nothing extraordinary."

At the outbreak of the war Meade was made a Brigadier-General of Volunteers and given command of one of the three Pennsylvania brigades. He fought under McClellan in the Peninsula campaign and was seriously wounded at the battle of Glendale. His mental distress at the time he received the wound was greater than his physical suffering because he had been shot in the back, just above the hip joint. He wondered what people would think of him when they heard he had been wounded in the back. He recovered in time to take part in the battle of Second Bull Run and succeeded the wounded Hooker in temporary command of the First Corps in the battle of Antietam. Under Hooker, Meade, as commander of the Fifth Corps, took part in the bloody repulse of Chancellorsville. His conduct in that battle was such that both General Reynolds and General Couch recommended him to the government as the next commander of the Army of the Potomac.

On June 28th, 1863, a messenger from Washington awakened Meade and informed him that he was to succeed Hooker as commander of the Army of the Potomac. He was thus placed in command of the army almost on the eve of the battle of Gettysburg. With little knowledge of Hooker's plans, Meade played his part well, and the country must always be grateful to him for his performance on that field. After the battle he was severely criticized for not following up Lee's army and destroying it before it crossed the Potomac. When Halleck telegraphed him that the escape of

Lee's army had "created great dissatisfaction in the mind of the President," Meade at once asked to be relieved. The distress of Lincoln upon the receipt of the news of Lee's escape was terrible, greater perhaps than at any other crisis in the war. Walking across the White House lawn after a meeting of the cabinet, Lincoln said to Gideon Welles, the Secretary of the Navy, that there seemed to him a determination that "Lee, though we had him in our hands, should escape with his force and plunder; and that, my God, is the last of this Army of the Potomac. There is bad faith somewhere. Meade has been pressed and urged, and only one of his generals was ready to attack, was ready to pounce on Lee; the rest held back. What does it mean, Mr. Welles? Great God! what does it mean?"

On the day that Lee's army recrossed the Potomac in safety, Lincoln wrote to Meade the famous unsent letter in which he expressed his deep disappointment at Lee's escape and foresaw a prolongation of the war: "Your golden opportunity is gone and I am distressed immeasurably because of it." After he had written this letter the kind-hearted Lincoln, fearing that it might hurt Meade, decided not to send it.

Meade's Mine Run campaign against Lee in the Fall of 1863 did not add anything to his reputation. He blamed the failure of that campaign on General French, who had not carried out the assignment given him. He had expected to be relieved of his command after Mine Run, but declared that he could not order an assault against his conscience when he had reason to think it would not meet with success. Pennypacker, in his *Life of Meade*, quotes him as saying: "I would rather a thousand times be relieved, charged with tardiness or incompetency, than have my conscience burdened with a wanton slaughter uselessly of brave men or with having jeopardized the great cause by doing what I thought wrong."

From time to time after Gettysburg there were rumors that Meade would be supplanted as commander of the Army of the Potomac. Less than a month after the battle

Meade heard from officers who had been in Washington that the President had offered the command of the army to Grant, who declined it but recommended Sherman. In December of 1863, Hancock, commander of the Second Corps, told Meade that the authorities at Washington had intended to relieve him and give the command to him, Hancock; but that this plan afterwards was abandoned. Hancock said further that the War Department was going to relieve Meade after the abortive Mine Run movement against Lee in November; but Halleck objected and said, "No. An officer who gained the Battle of Gettysburg is entitled to more consideration. Let us wait and see what General Meade has to say."

Before Grant had been appointed general-in-chief, but after his great victory at Chattanooga, Meade wrote of him: "He certainly has been very successful, and that nowadays is the measure of reputation. The enemy, however, have never had in any of their western armies either the generals or the troops they have had in Virginia. Nor has the country been so favorable for them as here." This was a common sentiment in the Army of the Potomac: that Grant had never encountered troops equal to the soldiers of Lee's army or met a general of Lee's capacity. What was forgotten was that the Army of the Potomac had always had the cream of the trained officers. When he won his first important victory at Fort Donelson, Grant had just three West Point men in his army: General C. F. Smith, his old commander at West Point; Colonel, afterwards General, McPherson; and himself.

Grant and Meade had their first meeting at the headquarters of the Army of the Potomac at Brandy Station. Of this meeting Meade said: "I was very much pleased with General Grant. He showed much more capacity and character than I had expected." Meade told Grant that perhaps he might wish an officer who had served with him in the West, mentioning Sherman especially, to replace him. If so, he urged Grant not to hesitate about making the change, for the work to be done was of such vast im-

portance to the nation that the feelings or wishes of no one person could stand in the way of selecting the right men for all positions. Grant assured him that he had no thought of substituting anyone; as for Sherman, he could not be spared from the West. "This incident," said Grant, "gave me a more favorable opinion of Meade than did his great victory at Gettysburg the July before. It is men who wait to be selected, and not those who seek, from whom we may always expect the most efficient service."

Meade felt more secure in his position after this meeting and wrote to his wife: "It would be almost a farce to relieve a man who fought the Battle of Gettysburg nine months after the battle, not for retreating, not for ordering a retreat, but for preparing an order which was never issued."<sup>1</sup> Meade's situation was embarrassing to himself and to Grant, and he foresaw that he would soon be eclipsed. "He will undoubtedly have the power of bringing here such a force as will effect results hitherto I have been unable to effect, and this will by the ignorant public be set down to his superior merit and quoted against me."

Incidents quickly arose to try the patience of the sensitive and irritable Meade. When Grant established his headquarters, Meade selected a house for him at Culpepper. Straightway the newspapers announced that Grant had established his headquarters eight miles nearer the enemy than Meade had done. This was the beginning of sorrows for Meade. After a few weeks of intercourse with Grant at army headquarters, Meade sums up his impression thus:

"Grant is not a striking man, has never mixed with the world, has but little manner. Indeed, is somewhat ill at ease in the presence of strangers. Hence a first impression is never favorable. His early education was undoubtedly very slight. In fact, I fancy his West Point course was pretty much all the education he ever had;

---

<sup>1</sup> This was a reference to the fact brought out in the hearing on Gettysburg before the Committee on the Conduct of the War. Meade had instructed his chief of staff, Butterfield, on the 2nd of July to prepare an order for the withdrawal of the army, if it became necessary.

and since his graduation I don't believe he has read or studied any. At the same time he has natural qualities of a high order, and is a man whom the more you see and know, the better you like him. He puts me in mind of old Taylor, and sometimes I fancy he models himself on old Zach."

It would be impossible to imagine two such opposites as Grant and Meade. Grant was plebeian in looks and carriage and had plebeians around him; Meade was the patrician. If the photograph of Meade be placed alongside one of the pictures of a statue of Julius Caesar, a marked similarity will be seen in the forehead and nose and general profile of the two soldiers. Meade was then forty-nine years of age, six feet tall, spare, partly bald, with a high forehead and a sad and serious look in his eyes. Grant was forty-two years of age, five feet, seven inches tall, and very ordinary in appearance. Colonel Theodore Lyman of Meade's staff gives us this picture of Grant:

"He is rather under middle height; of a spare, strong build; light brown hair, and short, light brown beard. His eyes are a queer blue; forehead high, nose aquiline, jaw squarely set, but not sensual. His face has three expressions: deep thought, extreme determination, and great simplicity and calmness . . . He habitually wears an expression as if he had determined to drive his head through a brick wall and was about to do it."

Meade was intellectual and methodical, with a well-disciplined engineer's mind. It was said that he was the only officer in the Army of the Potomac who, awakened in the night by an outburst of firing, could tell immediately just on what front, in what brigade, and in what regiment it occurred. Grant was unintellectual and unread, but had a good mind. He was patient, tolerant, easy of approach, and unperturbed in battle. Meade was impatient, irascible, agitated, angry, and in battle almost unapproachable. After a year's intimacy with Meade in the campaign against Richmond, Grant had this to say of him:

"He was brave and conscientious and commanded the respect of all who knew him. He was unfortunately of a

temper that would get beyond his control at times and make him speak to the officers of high rank in the most offensive manner. No one saw this fault more plainly than he himself, and no one regretted it more. This made it unpleasant at times, even in battle, for those around to approach him even with information."

Meade himself was well aware of his irritability. One day an officer who had formerly been a surgeon came to Meade's headquarters and complained that when he was riding through the camp some of the men shouted after him, "Old Pills," and he would like to have it stopped. Meade, then in one of his disagreeable moods, seized his eyeglasses, thrust them astride of his nose with both hands, and glaring at the officer exclaimed: "Well, what of that? How can I prevent it? Why, I hear that when I rode out the other day some of the men called me 'a damned old goggle-eyed snapping turtle.' And I can't even stop that."

When he established his headquarters with the Army of the Potomac, Grant realized that there was distrust on both sides. His own feeling was that "the Potomac Army had never been thoroughly fought." Young reports<sup>1</sup> that he also knew that many of the officers and soldiers of the Army of the Potomac felt that as a successful general he owed a good deal to fortune and to chance, and had never been called on to fight a general like Lee or any army like that of Northern Virginia. He was just a lucky man who had climbed to fame on the shoulders of Sherman and McPherson. Before he came to Washington in December of 1863, Grant had suggested as Meade's possible successor General W. F. ("Baldy") Smith or Sherman. One reason why Meade was not removed before Grant came east, or afterwards, was the high esteem in which he was held by his home state, Pennsylvania, on whose soil the greatest battle of the war had been fought and won, and which had sent more troops into the Union Army than any other state except New York.

Grant was determined that the Army of the Potomac

---

<sup>1</sup> Young, John Russell, *Around the World with General Grant*, Vol. II, p. 64.



should fight, and fight continuously. In one of their early interviews Grant told Meade: "I want it distinctly understood beforehand that after we cross the river [the Rapidan] there is to be no maneuvering with this army for position." This was in answer to some remark Meade had made. Grant felt that the Army of the Potomac had exhibited the weakness of too much maneuvering and insufficient aggressive and offensive fighting. Meade later confessed to John Gibbon, one of his ablest officers, that he could not help feeling a curiosity to see how operations would be carried on without maneuver. Gibbon adds that the result of Grant's first campaign in Virginia justified Meade's skepticism in that there was too much hammer-and-tongs fighting, ending in the bloody repulse at Second Cold Harbor, and not enough scientific maneuvering of the army.

Grant held the view, only partly true, that the southern people and their press, after the defeat of their two invasions at Antietam in 1862 and at Gettysburg in 1863, comforted themselves with the idea that they had been fighting a defensive war. In this view, their only purpose was to defend Richmond, their capital, from capture; therefore, these and other battles "were by them set down as failures on our part and victories for them. Their army believed this; it produced a morale which could only be overcome by desperate and continuous hard fighting."

Grant now introduced the Army of the Potomac, and also the Army of Northern Virginia under Lee, to the technique of hard, smashing, continuous, and offensive fighting. Whatever may be said of it from the standpoint of maneuvering and the science of military operations, this informed the South that it was engaged in unrelenting battle, and made the Army of the Potomac realize that the time for fighting one engagement and then resting for weeks or months was past. After the first bitter fighting in the Wilderness in those early days of May, 1864, the men in the Army of the Potomac wondered if, after the losses and hard fighting of the first two days' struggle, the army would retreat as it had done so many times before. On the night

of the 7th of May the army was set in motion towards Spottsylvania Court House. At first the tired fighters and marchers hardly knew the direction of their march. Eventually, the word passed down the line, "Grant is moving toward Richmond!" This was what the men had been waiting to hear; whenever Grant rode by on his black pony, Little Jeff, the men in the ranks made the woody defiles of the Wilderness echo with their cheers. Those night cheers were more significant and ominous for Lee's army than salvos of artillery or bursts of musketry fire; they told the enemy that the Army of the Potomac now had a commander who would make it fight, not one or two battles, but a hundred battles, if necessary, until it achieved its goal. Those Wilderness cheers sounded the death knell of the Confederacy.

Grant makes no mention of the occurrence in his *Memoirs*, but according to his son, Jesse, he sounded out the Quartermaster-General of the Army, Rufus Ingalls, on the matter of taking command of the Army of the Potomac and supplanting Meade. Ingalls at first was favorable to the proposal. Then he said: "Where are you going to be, General Grant?"

"Right there with the Army of the Potomac," Grant replied.

"In that case you couldn't have a better man than Meade. You and I, General Grant, are working for the same cause, not for personal aggrandizement. General Meade under your personal supervision will do all or more than I could do, while I have no subordinate who would fill my place. The Army of the Potomac is going to move rapidly now, and must be fed. I feel that I can be more useful where I am."

Ingalls was a man of pre-eminent ability who was buried in a staff position. He was Quartermaster-General of the Army of the Potomac during all its campaigns, yet to the public his name was hardly known. He and Grant had been friends at West Point, in Mexico, and on the Pacific coast. Young reports Grant's statement: "Nothing ever disturbed or excited him. He was ready for every emergency. He

could move and feed a hundred thousand men without ruffling his temper . . . Ingalls in command of troops would, in my opinion, have become a great and famous general. If the command of the Army of the Potomac had ever become vacant, I would have given it to Ingalls."

The 4th of May, 1864, was a bright, warm day; so warm, indeed, that many of the soldiers of the Army of the Potomac threw away their overcoats, lining the roadside with a fringe of blue. Just where the road from Culpepper, Virginia pitches down the hill to Germana Ford on the Rapidan, General Grant sat on his bay horse Cincinnatus, smoking in silence as he watched his army go down the steep hill, cross the ford, and disappear into the woods on the other side. The sun was dancing on the brass pieces of the artillery and on the white covers of the commissary wagons. Over the pontoons rumbled the artillery and the trains, followed by the infantry, marching with broken step, while the cavalry splashed through the ford on either side of the swaying bridges. Up the bank on the farther side they went, and then vanished into the deep and hitherto ominous forests of the Wilderness.

Grant was unusually well-dressed that day. A military sash stretched across his breast and on his hands were a pair of yellow-brown thread gloves. He used these gloves in the first days of the Wilderness campaign until he had worn holes in the fingers as he sat under the trees at his headquarters whittling sticks and listening to the reports brought in by members of his staff.

The veterans of the Army of the Potomac tried to appraise their silent and undemonstrative commander as he sat on his bay horse watching them march down the hill to the Rapidan. Near Grant was his chief of staff, General John A. Rawlins. But there was a third man who aroused much curiosity among the soldiers. He was of large, imposing frame, dressed in black citizen's clothes, and had so melancholy and funereal an appearance that the soldiers asked one another if he was Grant's private undertaker, or a parson who was going to read the burial service over the

body of the Confederacy. The man who aroused this curiosity among the soldiers was Grant's chief political friend and backer.

Of the so-called "Grant Men," the most powerful and influential was this civilian, Elihu Washburne, member of Congress from the Galena, Illinois district. It seems reasonably certain that Grant never would have risen to great distinction without the aid of Washburne, who was responsible for every military promotion that came to Grant, and was his friend and advocate in Congress and with the government. Their close association had a sad ending in 1880 when Grant, seeking a third term, blamed Washburne for his defeat at the Republican Convention of that year. Grant never again referred to him without bitterness.

In the operations of the Army of the Potomac Grant tried, as far as possible, to leave Meade in independent command. His orders for the army were as a rule given through Meade and his staff and were general in their nature, leaving the detail and the execution to Meade. This was not by any means an ideal military situation. It caused loss of time and meant that Grant must always consider whether some order he had given or some movement he had directed, without going through Meade's headquarters, would offend him. Had Grant been actively directing the Army of the Potomac at Cold Harbor and at the crater at Petersburg, those disasters would probably have been avoided.

The Army of the Potomac now consisted of four infantry corps: the Second, commanded by Hancock "the Superb"; the Sixth, by John Sedgwick, who was to fall at Spottsylvania Court House; the Fifth, under Warren, whose tragic fate it was to be relieved of the command of his corps in the midst of the battle of Five Forks by the angry and profane Sheridan; and the Ninth Corps, at first held in reserve, under Burnside. Burnside himself had been the commander of the army when it met a bloody defeat at Fredericksburg in 1862. The cavalry corps was under the command of Sheridan. One of Grant's first tasks

was to smooth out difficulties which arose between Sheridan and Meade. The attitude of Sheridan toward Meade, the commander of the Army of the Potomac, was hardly military or proper; but Sheridan knew that, in his dealings with Meade, he could always fall back on Grant.

After the battles of the Wilderness and Spottsylvania, Grant recommended that Meade and Sheridan be commissioned major-generals in the Regular Army: "General Meade has more than met my most sanguine expectation." Yet about that same time Meade sounds the first note of complaint about Grant. He was evidently feeling the embarrassment of his situation as commander of an army, yet not a commander. "I don't think he is a very magnanimous man; but I believe he is above any littleness, and whatever injustice is done me, I believe is not intentional on his part, but arises from the force of circumstance and from that weakness inherent in human nature which compels a man to look to his own interest."

Meade's spleen and envy found expression after the repulse of the army at Second Cold Harbor, an engagement which he fought all by himself, for Grant came on the field only one hour in the middle of the day. "I think Grant has had his eyes opened, and is willing to admit now that Virginia and Lee's army is not Tennessee and Bragg's army." Thus, even so high-minded a man as Meade took some little satisfaction in the reverses which the army had suffered under Grant's command. About the same time, commenting on an editorial in *The Army Magazine* by Coppee, who praised the genius of Grant, Meade said: "Now to tell the truth, the latter has greatly disappointed me, and since this campaign I really begin to think I am something of a general."

Meade's smouldering resentment at the acclaim given to Grant and the direct or implied reflection upon his own past management of the Army of the Potomac burst into flame when he read in *The Philadelphia Inquirer* of June 2nd an article written by Edward Cropsey, one of the press correspondents. In this article Cropsey wrote that Meade

was as much commander of the Army of the Potomac as ever, that he was entitled to great credit for the movements of the army thus far, and that Grant was present only because he regarded the campaign as the vital one of the war and wished to decide on the spot all questions that would be referred to him as general-in-chief. So far, so good. But the article then went on to say: "On one eventful night of the present campaign, Grant's presence saved the army and the nation too; not that General Meade was on the point to commit a blunder unwittingly, but his devotion to his country made him loath to risk her last army on what he deemed a chance. Grant assumed the responsibility and we are still 'On to Richmond.'"

The angry Meade summoned Cropsey before him and asked him what he meant by such an assertion. Cropsey said he had heard that, on the night of the second day's battle in the Wilderness, Meade had urged Grant to withdraw the army across the Rapidan; but Grant had firmly resisted all his intercessions, and thus the country was saved the disgrace of a retreat. When Meade asked his authority for such a statement, Cropsey said, "It was the talk of the camp." This made Meade all the angrier. He told Cropsey it was a "base and wicked lie," and that he was going to make an example of him which would serve to deter others from committing like offenses. By his orders Cropsey was placed on a horse with placards hung on his breast and back bearing the inscription, "Libeler of the Press," and drummed out of camp. Grant happened to be present when Meade was making out the order for the expulsion of Cropsey and, although he was acquainted with the offender and knew his highly respectable family in Illinois, fully approved of it.

Charles A. Dana, Assistant Secretary of War, was also present at the interview, and with Grant tried to comfort Meade with the assurance that the story would not be credited. In a dispatch which he sent to the Secretary of War, Dana said of this report that Meade wanted to retreat: "This is entirely untrue. He has not shown any

weakness of the sort since moving from Culpepper, nor once intimated a doubt as to the successful issue of the campaign." Porter reports Stanton's immediate answer: "Please say to General Meade that the lying report alluded to in your telegram was not even for a moment believed by the President or myself. We have the most perfect confidence in him. He could not wish a more exalted estimation of his ability, his firmness, and every quality of a commanding general than is entertained for him." The Cropsey incident created a strong prejudice against Meade on the part of the war correspondents. From that time on the newspapers boycotted him, and for six months his name was not mentioned in some of the prominent newspapers of the country. Pennypacker is authority for the statement that S. Cadwallader, correspondent at Grant's headquarters for *The New York Herald*, said that henceforth, if a general order was issued, Meade's name was cut out before publication.

About the same time there occurred another incident which brought the wrath of the newspaper men down on Meade. At the opening of the Wilderness Campaign, Grant's friend and backer in Congress, Elihu Washburne, brought to his headquarters William Swinton, who had been a correspondent for *The New York Times*. Washburne told Grant that Swinton wished to accompany the army with the view of writing a history of the war when it was over; he assured Grant that Swinton would not act as a correspondent for the press. With this assurance Grant permitted him to accompany the army, but he soon discovered that he was corresponding with some paper. One night Meade and Grant were consulting in Grant's tent with no one present. Colonel Bowers, one of Grant's staff, saw a man seated on the ground nearby and leaning against a stump, who seemed to be listening to the conversation between Meade and Grant. He called this to the attention of Colonel Rowley, another member of the staff, who took the man by the shoulder and asked him "in language more forcible than polite" what he was doing there. He proved to be Swinton, and, as

his answers were evasive and unsatisfactory, he was given a stern warning against further eavesdropping. About a month later Meade came to Grant's headquarters at Cold Harbor to report that Burnside had arrested Swinton for some serious offense and had ordered him to be shot that afternoon. Grant at once ordered his release, but directed Meade to expel him from the lines of the army. This brought down upon Meade, who was not himself responsible for the order, the usual barrage of newspaper condemnation.<sup>1</sup>

As the weeks and the months went by, the sensitive and irascible Meade was stung by the criticisms which were directed at him, and still more by the omission of his name in army reports. One day at Meade's headquarters, Charles A. Dana opened a dispatch from Sherman and tactlessly read it aloud to Meade and his staff. In the dispatch Sherman informed Grant that the Army of the West, having fought, could now afford to maneuver, and that if his inspiration could make the Army of the Potomac do its share, success would crown their efforts. Meade took this as an affront to the Army of the Potomac and a reflection on his leadership of it. Lyman describes him: "With his eyes standing out about one inch, and in a voice like cutting an iron bar with a hand saw, Meade said: 'Sir, I consider that dispatch an insult to the army I command. The Army of the Potomac does not require General Grant's inspiration, or anybody's else inspiration, to make it fight.'"

Characteristic of the attacks and slurs launched on Meade was an article which appeared on October 13th in Henry Ward Beecher's paper, *The Independent*. In this article, the writer attributed the failure to take Petersburg to what he called Meade's clumsiness: "The old blunder was once more repeated. The Executive Officer of that army could not control its maneuvers." The article went on to say that Meade was the general who at Gettysburg bore off the

---

<sup>1</sup> Swinton subsequently became professor of English at the University of California, and was a most successful writer of school and college text books. His *Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac* is one of the ablest pieces of military writing produced in America.



laurels which belonged to Howard and to Hancock; at Mine Run drew back in dismay from a conflict which he had invited; and who in the campaign in Virginia "annulled the genius of his chief by executive incapacity . . . who in a word holds his place by virtue of no personal qualifications, but in deference to a presumed, fictitious, perverted, political necessity, and who hangs upon the neck of General Grant like an Old Man of the Sea, whom he longs to be rid of, and whom he retains solely in deference to the weak complacency of his constitutional Commander-in-Chief." The article concluded by demanding that Grant's hands be strengthened by the removal of Meade.

After this article appeared the indignant Meade asked Grant to give him for publication a few lines that would set at rest "as far as he was concerned, the wicked and malicious falsehoods which that article contained." He told Grant that, while he did not doubt the kindly feeling of Lincoln and Stanton, he felt he was the victim of bitter hostility on the part of certain supporters of Lincoln, and that he did not wish in any way to embarrass the President by retaining command of the army. He said, moreover, that he was becoming disheartened by the attacks made upon him; that his usefulness and influence with the army were being impaired because he was ignored in all successful operations; that he was held responsible the moment anything went wrong; and that, unless some measures were taken to satisfy the public and silence the persistent clamors against him, he preferred to be relieved and desired Grant to say so to the President.

These oft-repeated complaints of Meade were doubtless an affliction to Grant. It must have been of this interview that Grant was speaking when he said of Meade: "Sometimes he would have fits of despondency or temper which were trying. On one occasion he came to me in a great passion and resigned his command. Things were not suiting him. . . something had annoyed him. I soothed him and talked him out of it. But the impression made on me was so marked that I resolved should he repeat the offer of his resignation to accept it. I am glad it never took that form."

After Cold Harbor and its bloody repulse, there was great discontent in the country and much newspaper complaint about "Grant the Butcher." General Dodge, who was with the army at that time and was sent by Grant to visit the headquarters of the various corps, discovered an alarming amount of criticism and hostile comments on Grant's strategy. This was something that Dodge had never known in the Army of the Tennessee. Different corps and division commanders were criticizing one another and the general-in-chief. Even Meade would sometimes exclaim to some around him, "When is Grant going to take Richmond?" When Dodge mentioned to Rawlins, Grant's chief of staff, what he had heard at different headquarters, Rawlins laughed and said, "General, this is not the old Army of the Tennessee." Many of Grant's close friends in the army were urging him to dismiss Meade. On July 7th, 1864, Dana telegraphed the War Department that Meade's generals had lost confidence in him as a commander and that in the Petersburg attack, Meade, despairing of securing cooperation among the corps commanders, had let each one attack on his own account. "A change," he said, "in the command of the Army of the Potomac now seems possible . . . Grant seems to be coming to the conviction that Meade must be relieved."

After several assaults on the Confederate position at Cold Harbor on June 2nd had ended in bloody repulse, General W. F. Smith, commander of the 18th Corps, received a verbal order from General Meade to make another assault. This order Smith refused to obey because he regarded another assault under such conditions "as involving a wanton waste of life." An hour after this refusal, Colonel Comstock of Grant's staff came to investigate Smith's position, but went away apparently satisfied with the impossibility of carrying out Meade's order.

When Meade came to Smith's headquarters on the morning of June 5th, Smith asked him to justify such an order for battle as that of June 2nd. Meade had ordered an attack "all along the line," a plan of attack which Smith character-

ized as belonging "to the first period of history after mankind ceased to fight in unorganized masses." Meade replied that he "had worked out every plan for every move, from the crossing of the Rapidan onward, that the papers were full of the doings of Grant's army, and that he was tired of it, and was determined to let General Grant plan his own battles." Here we have the emergence of Meade's displeasure at being eclipsed by Grant in the eyes of the nation, and also the astonishing fact that he ordered a general assault without careful planning and reconnaissance because he was irritated at the position he occupied under Grant and now intended to allow the latter to make his own plans.

When Jubal Early made his raid upon the Shenandoah Valley and threatened Washington, Meade heard rumors that he was to be sent to Washington to command the forces being assembled to attack Early, and queried Grant about it. Grant replied that he thought Wright's Sixth Corps, added to Hunter's troops, could complete the task, and that he had given Wright the supreme command; if another corps were sent, he promised that Meade would accompany it. Two weeks later Meade was cheered by Grant's statement that he had suggested his name to the War Department to take command of the Department of West Virginia, Susquehanna, Baltimore, and Washington. Meade was chafing under the irritations and embarrassments of his present situation and the prospect of an independent command was very pleasing to him. A few days later he learned that Sheridan had been ordered to Washington to take command of the forces detached from the main army for the defense of Maryland and Washington. He went to Grant at once and asked him why, since Grant had suggested him for the command, it had been given to Sheridan. Grant told him that Lincoln feared his removal from the command of the Army of the Potomac might be construed into disapprobation of his course. However, if Meade desired a transfer he would be very glad to have it arranged. A week later, on August 10th, Meade suffered a real blow. He learned from the Washington papers that Sheridan had been temporarily assigned to the new

military division of West Virginia, Susquehanna, Baltimore, and Washington, the division which Grant had told Meade was intended for him. When Meade demanded an explanation of his broken promise and asked why Sheridan had been placed in command, Grant evasively replied that Sheridan had been put in charge only temporarily. Thereupon Meade tartly remarked that he supposed "temporarily meant as long as there was anything to do."

Toward the end of August Meade learned that Sherman, Hancock, and Sheridan had been named for promotion to the rank of major-general in the Regular Army and that his own name was not mentioned. Hurt and stung by this affront, Meade went to Grant and told him that the proposal to make Sheridan a major-general in the Regular Army over his head was an insult to the Army of the Potomac and to him, and that he would leave the army when this occurred. Grant pacified Meade by telling him that he had asked for the immediate appointment of Sherman, Hancock, and Sheridan to avoid having Sherman and Meade appointed on the same day, which would have meant that Meade would outrank Sherman. He assured Meade that he would still be made a major-general when he was assigned to the Middle Division, the forces operating in Western Virginia under Sheridan against Early; and that he would have put Meade in command sooner but for the fact that Sheridan at that time had fallen back, and he was reluctant to supersede him lest the public misconstrue the act as a disapproval of Sheridan's course. As a matter of fact, Meade was never placed in command in the Shenandoah Valley where Sheridan had been operating, and there can be no question that Grant was lacking in frankness in his dealings at this time with the commander of the Army of the Potomac. Meade correctly summarizes the matter when he says: "The whole substance of the explanation was that he desired to advance his favorites, Sherman and Sheridan . . . It is the same old story of inability to appreciate the sensitiveness of a man of character and honor."

The matter was finally adjusted when Lincoln ordered

Stanton to make out Meade's appointment as a major-general in the Regular Army dating from August 19th. This made Meade fourth in rank in the Regular Army; those now ranking him were Grant, Halleck, and Sherman. Sherman's appointment dated from August 12th, and Sheridan's from November 14th, 1864. This final arrangement was altogether satisfactory to Meade, especially with regard to Sheridan, with whom he had had so many clashes. Meade was now satisfied as to Grant's truthfulness and sincerity: "I like Grant and have always done so, notwithstanding I saw certain elements in his character which were operating disadvantageously to me."

About this same time, after these months of association with Grant, Meade thus appraised his character and military ability: "Grant is not a mighty genius, but he is a good soldier, of great force of character; honest and upright, of pure purposes . . . His prominent quality is unflinching tenacity of purpose which blinds him to opposition and obstacles. Certainly a great quality in a commander when controlled by judgment, but a dangerous one otherwise . . . Take him all in all, he is, in my judgment, the best man the War has yet produced."

The Army of the Potomac was "directed by Grant, commanded by Meade, and led by Hancock, Sedgwick, and Warren." Before the end came at Appomattox, these three great corps commanders had all disappeared from the army: Sedgwick by death on the field of battle, Hancock by wounds, and Warren by the tragedy of his dismissal by Sheridan. In the campaign of 1864 Grant himself realized that many of his plans had failed to materialize and that his army was not functioning properly. In conversation around the campfire at the City Point headquarters, Major-General Grenville M. Dodge asked Grant who was responsible for the failure of many of his plans in the campaign. Grant looked at him in a half-humorous way and responded, "That, General, has not yet been determined." Dodge replied, "If it had been in the West, some of us would have lost our heads."

There were high officers in the Army of the Potomac who undoubtedly should have "lost their heads"; but Grant was patient and long-suffering. This may have been because of his certainty that, despite the friction in the army, the discontent in the country, and the great number of men who at that time were deserting, victory could not be long postponed.

After Lee abandoned his lines at Petersburg and retreated westward and southward with the hope of joining Johnston's army in North Carolina, Grant took more active and direct command of the movements of the Army of the Potomac. In a telegram to Stanton on April 5th, 1865, in which he told of the evacuation of Richmond, Dana said that General Grant was now commanding the army in person, "having got disgusted with General Meade's stickling about his own dignity." A few days before the end came, Sheridan, with the advance, sent Grant a letter hidden in a pellet of tinfoil in a quid of tobacco, informing him that Meade had given him orders to move on the right flank and cover Richmond. This, he felt, would leave room for Lee to escape toward Johnston. Sheridan intended to move by the left flank, leave Richmond, and press Lee; it was the plan of a fighter against that of an engineer. Grant rode at once to Meade's headquarters, only to find this general ill in bed. He changed Meade's orders and directed the whole army to move by the left flank at 4 o'clock in the morning. Grant later said that Meade co-operated in the most loyal manner.

On April 9th, the day of the surrender, Meade opened Lee's second communication to Grant, asking for a suspension of hostilities. He replied that he lacked authority to do this except on the distinct understanding that Lee was prepared to accept the terms laid down in Grant's letter of April 8th; however, as hostilities between Lee and the Army of the James under Ord had already ceased, Meade agreed to an armistice at 2 P.M. Meade's consent thus brought to an end the great struggle which had devastated a continent and filled hundreds of thousands of graves.

In that final act of Meade there was noble self-abnegation. Possessing complete military right and authority until he had heard from Grant, he might have rejected Lee's request, continued the attack, crushed the diminished army of Lee, taken him prisoner, and been the chief figure at the surrender. But all this Meade, with his wonted loftiness of character, rejected from regard for the common good.

The tragedy of Appomattox lay in the absence of Meade. We wonder now that Grant did not postpone the final scene at the McLean house until Meade could attend. Sheridan was present; the golden-haired Custer was there; Babcock, Porter, Badeau, and other members of Grant's staff appeared; but the general who had won the great victory of Gettysburg, and who for almost two years had commanded the Army of the Potomac which had achieved the final victory at Appomattox, was absent. We cannot think that Grant deliberately planned to humiliate Meade. Perhaps his relegation of Meade to the background in the final scene at Appomattox is best explained by the quoted comment Meade had made on a previous occasion: "It is the same old story of inability to appreciate the sensitiveness of a man of character and honor."

Meade drained his final cup of humiliation two weeks after Appomattox when his army was made part of the Military Division of the James under the command of General Halleck. When he learned of this action, Meade said: "This is the most cruel and humiliating indignity that has been put upon me. It is General Grant's work, and done by him with a full knowledge of my services and the consideration due them . . . There is nothing left me but the submission which a good soldier must always show. I, however, now give up Grant."

After the war, Meade was appointed to the command of the Department of the South with headquarters at Atlanta. When Grant became President in March of 1869, his post as General of the Army became vacant. On all sides it was taken for granted that Sherman, who had been made lieutenant-general when Grant was promoted as Gen-

eral of the Army, would now occupy the highest post, leaving vacant that of lieutenant-general. General Halleck ranked Meade and was the senior major-general, but no one expected him to achieve further promotion. Meade's friends were certain that the honor would be his. Shortly before the inauguration of Grant, when Meade was on his way south after a brief visit to his family in Philadelphia, he stopped to see Grant, spoke to him of the various rumors which were rife, and said he felt the lieutenant-generalship was due him. Grant listened to what Meade had to say, but made no reply; he had already made up his mind. Meade's friends had warned him of what was coming; but up to the last Meade felt that Grant would do him justice and that he would be named lieutenant-general. Now Grant's ominous silence informed him that his hopes were doomed. One of Grant's first acts as President was to appoint Major-General Sheridan lieutenant-general of the army. "I never could have felt comfortable," Young reports Grant as saying ten years afterwards, "if I had promoted anyone over Sheridan."

When Meade learned of Sheridan's appointment, he wrote to his wife from Atlanta: "The blow has been struck and our worst fears realized. We must find consolation in the consciousness we have that it is the cruelest and meanest act of injustice, and the hope, if there is any sense of wrong and justice in the country, that the man who perpetrated it will some day be made to feel so."

*Let's the Gen. speak - but hold, of course,  
select what he wants them to say.*



# 3

## Grant and McPherson

“The country has lost one of its best soldiers, and I have lost my best friend.” That was Grant’s comment when he learned that McPherson had fallen in battle.

Sherman deserves the first place among the generals who helped Grant to achieve fame and success; the second belongs to James Birdseye McPherson. There can be no doubt of this evaluation, for Grant bestows the highest praise upon McPherson, bracketing him with Sherman as one of the two men to whom he owed the greatest debt.

It is not easy, however, as it is in the relationship of the other “Grant Men,” to point to one particular service which McPherson performed for Grant. It must be remembered that McPherson, as a highly trained engineer, was of great service to Grant in his campaigns in the Mississippi Valley from Donelson to Vicksburg. Indeed, McPherson was the only West Point man who was continuously with Grant’s army during those early campaigns. We must also consider the element of friendship; Grant referred to him as “my best friend.” A friend is always an asset, but especially so when that friend is a brilliant subordinate commander.

Today McPherson’s name hardly ranks with those of the most famous of the Civil War commanders. This is due in large part to the fact that he was killed in battle July 22nd, 1864, nine months before the end of the war. Had

he survived to the end of the war and risen, as he undoubtedly would have, to even greater achievements as the chief lieutenant of Sherman, and perhaps been assigned to an independent command, the name of McPherson would stand today in as bright a light as that which shines upon the names of Sheridan, Thomas, Meade, and Sherman.

James Birdseye McPherson, only thirty-five when he fell from his black horse in the woods at Peach Tree Creek, was born on November 14th, 1828, on a farm in Green county, Ohio, fifteen miles from Lake Erie. The town of Clyde now stands near the place of his birth.<sup>1</sup> He was thus another of that remarkable group of Ohio-born soldiers, including Grant, Sherman, and Sheridan, who rendered such distinguished service to their country in the Civil War.

Until he was fourteen years of age he lived at home, working on the farm and attending the log-cabin country school. Ambition's flame burned early within him; in one of his boyhood letters he says, "I have set my mark high, and mean to do all I can to reach it." His boyhood was marked by religious and moral earnestness. When he was fourteen he went to work for Robert Smith, storekeeper and postmaster at Green Springs, and remained with him until he entered West Point in 1849. He had a brilliant record and stood first in his class at the military academy. In the same class and in forty-fourth place was John B. Hood, the fiery Confederate general who succeeded Joseph E. Johnston at Atlanta and launched the attack against Sherman's army when McPherson was killed.

Mental capacity and moral earnestness were McPherson's distinguishing traits at West Point. General William B. Hazen, Confederate officer, author of a manual on tactics, and a professor at the academy when McPherson was there, said of him: "He was the best scholar in his class at West Point, the highest moral character of the whole student corps." Professor D. H. Mahan, the West Point instructor who gives us so many interesting estimates of the

<sup>1</sup> Clyde was the "Winesburg" of Sherwood Anderson's realistic sketches of a small Ohio town in the 1880's.

men who passed before him at the academy, said that McPherson was always at the head of his class and was looked upon as one of the ablest men the institution sent forth.

McPherson was graduated in 1853 and received a commission as brevet second lieutenant of engineers. For a number of years he was engaged in engineering work, and for a time was stationed at New York, working on the forts at the Narrows. It was there he first met Sherman, then trying his hand at banking in New York. They had rooms in the same house, 100 Park Street, and thus cemented a friendship some years before they became associated on the battlefields of the Civil War. In 1859 McPherson was stationed at San Francisco, where he commanded Alcatraz Island and its forts; this is now the site of a famous federal prison. At San Francisco McPherson made the acquaintance of General Henry W. Halleck, a friendship which, as we shall see, was to prove most advantageous for him. Here, too, he encountered Sherman again.

As the national situation grew more exciting and critical, the young lieutenant of engineers commenced to chafe under inaction on his far-off rocky fortress and applied for a transfer to the East. This was not granted immediately and for a time he was compelled to wait and watch from afar the opening of the bloody drama. On February 20th, 1861, he wrote to his mother of his resolve to stand by the Union: "I am at present living on the island beneath the stars and stripes, which wave proudly from the flagstaff in the barracks, where I trust they will continue to wave as long as one stone rests upon another."

For a young officer only thirty-two years of age, McPherson had a remarkable grasp of the national situation and saw clearly the long and desperate character of the war and its inevitable outcome. This is shown in the letter he wrote to one of the officers under him at Alcatraz Island, E. P. Alexander, later one of Lee's chief artillery officers. Alexander reported to McPherson that he must resign from

the army and enlist with his state, Virginia. In reply McPherson wrote:

"If you must go, I will give the leave of absence, and do all in my power to facilitate your going. But don't go . . .

"This war is not going to be the ninety days affair that papers and politicians are predicting. Both sides are in deadly earnest, and it is going to be fought out to the bitter end. If you go, as an educated soldier, you will be put in the front rank. God only knows what may happen to you individually, but for your cause there can be but one result. *It must be lost.* Your whole population is only about eight millions, while the North has twenty millions. Of your eight millions, three millions are slaves who may become an element of danger. You have no army, no navy, no treasury, and practically none of the manufactures and machine shops necessary for the support of armies, and for war on a large scale. You are but scattered agricultural communities, and you will be cut off from the rest of the world by blockade. Your cause must end in defeat, and the individual risks to you must be great."

Of this letter Alexander said:

"I could not but be greatly impressed by this appeal. It made me realize, as I had never done before, the gravity of the decision which I had to make. But one consideration was inexorable: *I must go with my people.* So I answered: 'What you say is probably all true. But my situation is just this. My people are going to war. They are in deadly earnest, believing it to be for their liberty. If I don't come and bear my part, they will believe me to be a coward. And I shall not know whether I am or not. I have just *got* to go and stand my chances.'"

To this McPherson replied: "In your situation I would probably feel the same way about it." Alexander then wrote his resignation, dating it May 1st, and McPherson gave him leave of absence, and did everything possible to make his going easy and comfortable. "I never saw him again," wrote Alexander, "after our sad parting on the dock, for, as he had foreseen, he was ordered East, and, having been

made a major-general and won high distinction, was killed at Atlanta in July, 1864."

Orders finally came for McPherson to go east, and he sailed from San Francisco in August of 1861 on *The Golden Gate*. On the same ship, returning from Fort Vancouver, was Lieutenant, afterwards General, James H. Wilson. The two brilliant young engineer officers struck up a warm friendship on the long voyage. Wilson thus describes McPherson as he was at that time: "Slightly over six feet tall, with a commanding figure, a Jovelike head, and flashing dark eyes, he was as fine a specimen of manhood as any race could produce. With a mind illuminated by learning, and manners made charming by a sunny and hopeful temperament, he was the joy of our party and favorite of everybody on the ship."

McPherson had been made a captain in the engineering corps just before he sailed, and was also appointed captain in one of the new infantry regiments. As captain in the engineers he would be eligible to the command of a company of sappers and miners, the utmost to which an officer in this position could aspire. Lee and McClellan had both served as engineers in Mexico, and they were the most discussed soldiers in the two armies. The modest McPherson thought the command of a company of engineers would be far above his reach, but Wilson urged him and encouraged him to make every effort to obtain such a post.

One night, after long consideration and discussion, McPherson exclaimed to Wilson: "Well, I'll go for it, and if I can only get orders to raise such a company with you for my first lieutenant, I shall be satisfied, even if I am killed in the first battle." When the two officers arrived at Washington, they were encouraged by their respective chiefs to proceed with their plans. Both went to Boston, McPherson to raise a company of his own, and Wilson to assist a captain of his own corps in raising another. In the swift movement of events as the war opened, neither held the post which they had discussed together on shipboard as the gateway to fame and glory.

When Halleck was delegated to the command of the Department of Missouri, he remembered McPherson, whom he had met in California, and appointed him aide-de-camp and colonel on his staff. In the expedition against Fort Donelson McPherson was assigned as chief engineer to Grant. Grant was happy to have him on his staff, for well-educated engineer officers were very scarce in the western armies.

In the battle of Shiloh on April 6th and 7th, 1862, the first great battle of the war, McPherson as a staff officer accompanied Grant constantly. The Union Army was already posted at Shiloh on the west bank of the Tennessee River when Grant was restored to its command on March 17th. Because of the desperate situation in which his army found itself at the end of the first day's battle, Grant was severely criticized for not having thrown up entrenchments. He did instruct McPherson to trace a line of works, but McPherson reported that the only suitable location for breast-works and ditches was to the rear of the camps and that the ground which it was proposed to protect was unsuitable for camp sites. All the high officers of the army seem to have been opposed to fortifications at Shiloh on the ground that their campaign was an aggressive one, and that erecting earthen defenses would destroy the spirit of the troops. One of those who held this opinion was General C. F. Smith, whom Grant had just succeeded in command of the Army of the Tennessee. Smith informed his new commander: "I want nothing better than to have the rebels to come out and attack us. We can whip them to hell. Our men supposed we have come here to fight, and if we begin to spade it will make them think we fear the enemy." Grant was influenced in the arrangements he made at Shiloh by this counsel from Smith and by the report of McPherson.

Sherman relates that on the 16th of March, when Smith was still in command, he and McPherson made a careful reconnoissance of the ground in front of the army. Answering the criticism made against Grant for not throwing up fortifications, Sherman said: "I always acted on the sup-

position that we were an invading army. We did not fortify our camp against an attack because we had no orders to do so, and because such a course would have made our raw men timid. . . . At a later period in the war, we could have rendered this position impregnable in one night; but at this time we did not do it, and it may be it is well we did not."

When he said that later on in the war a position like that at Shiloh could have been rendered impregnable in a single night, Sherman doubtless was thinking of field works, which was an art the soldiers learned in the hard school of experience. As for his conclusion that it was just as well they did not throw up entrenchments, he meant that without them they gained a notable victory over the Confederate Army; whereas, if they had been heavily entrenched, the Confederate Army might not have made the attack and suffered the disaster which befell it.

Grant had heard the sound of the firing at his headquarters at Savannah when the Confederates made their attack early on the morning of the 6th. As he came steaming up the river on *The Tigress*, he ran in close to the shore at Crump's Landing, where Wallace commanded his division, and shouted to him: "General, you will get your troops under arms immediately and have them ready to move at a moment's notice." After Grant arrived at Shiloh and could estimate the critical situation, he dispatched an order by messenger to Wallace to bring his division at once to the battlefield. As the hours passed and the Union lines were being driven back towards the river, Grant sent McPherson and Rawlins to find Wallace and hurry him to the front. After a ride of four or five miles they finally located Wallace, at that time on the wrong road. McPherson gave him Grant's instructions, and then added, "For God's sake, move forward rapidly." In his vigorous way, Rawlins also urged Wallace<sup>1</sup> to march his division to the firing line as

---

<sup>1</sup> Rawlins was terribly excited, and when Wallace did not accept his suggestions to abandon the batteries and send the regiments forward one by one, he suggested to McPherson that Wallace be arrested. Wallace, Lew, *Autobiography*, Vol. I, P. 470.

soon as possible. This was at 3:30 in the afternoon; at that time Wallace was not more than four miles from the scene of action. Despite the urging of McPherson and Rawlins, he made a very deliberate march, and did not reach the battlefield until darkness had fallen and the first day's battle had ended. In the report which he subsequently made to Grant, Rawlins said of Wallace: "His presence there would have turned the tide of battle, which was raging with great fury, saved the lives of many brave men, and ere the setting of that crimson spring day's sun secured us certain victory." The more considerate McPherson said of Wallace that his movement was "not as rapid as the urgency of the case required. Perhaps this arose in a great measure from my impatience and anxiety to get this force on the field before dark."

Grant commented that if Wallace had been relieved that morning and replaced by General Morgan Smith he would have had the division at the battlefront by 10 o'clock in the morning. The author of *Ben Hur* was by no means as gifted a general as he was a writer.

During the battle Grant was riding with Major J. P. Hawkins and McPherson on the edge of a clearing when a concealed battery suddenly opened on them. They spurred their horses to a place of safety; when they drew rein, McPherson's horse was panting desperately. Examination showed that a ball had passed through the horse just back of the saddle; in a moment it fell dead. Another ball had struck and broken the scabbard of Grant's sword. Grant and McPherson both had a close call.

When Halleck took charge of the army after Shiloh and Grant was temporarily superseded, McPherson was promoted to Brigadier-General of Volunteers and made military superintendent of railroads in western Tennessee. All high officers consulted him as the man who was best informed on the positions of the army and the topography of the country. Sherman says of him at this time: "McPherson was one of the most useful staff officers in the whole army, riding night and day. I think he knew more of the



lay of the country around Corinth than any officer of the army." After the battle of Corinth on October 2nd, 1862, he was made a Major-General of Volunteers.

The Vicksburg campaign, in which he commanded the Seventeenth Corps, gave McPherson his great opportunity for military distinction, and he availed himself of it. Charles A. Dana, who had joined Grant's headquarters at Vicksburg as the representative of the War Department, thus describes McPherson as he knew him at that time:

"He was one of the best officers we had. He was but thirty-four years old . . . and a very handsome, gallant looking man, with rather a dark complexion, dark eyes, and a most cordial manner. McPherson was an engineer officer of fine natural ability and extraordinary acquirements. . . and was held in high estimation by Grant and his professional brethren. Halleck gave him his start in the Civil War, and he had been with Grant at Donelson, and ever since. He was a man without any pretensions, and always had a pleasant handshake for you."

After the failure on December 9th, 1862 of the first attempt to take Vicksburg, when Sherman suffered a bloody repulse at Chickasaw Bayou, nine miles up the Yazoo from Vicksburg, Grant made repeated but always fruitless efforts to invest Vicksburg; finally he ran the batteries and landed his troops south of the city. As the most skillful engineer in the army, McPherson played a prominent part in these successive movements. He entertained a particularly bold plan to divert the Mississippi at Lake Providence, seventy miles south of Vicksburg, by cutting the levee and letting the river into Lake Providence, thence into Baxter Bayou, thence into the Red River, and thence back into the Mississippi. If this plan had worked, troops could have been transported by water to a point south of Vicksburg. This gigantic engineering feat must have greatly stirred the mind of a brilliant engineer like McPherson. But when the levee was cut, a wilderness of cypress trees, too formidable to be rooted out, was encountered in Baxter Bayou, and the project was abandoned.

*Sherman's assault force did not leave  
Memphis until Dec 20, Sherman  
withdrew 1/1/63*

After Grant had run the batteries at Vicksburg and crossed the river at Grand Gulf, McPherson's Seventeenth Corps was always in the forefront of the hottest battle. McPherson accompanied Sherman when he entered Jackson, the capital of Mississippi, far to the east of Vicksburg, and hoisted the stars and stripes on the dome of the state house. In the hotel facing the state house park Grant met with his two chief lieutenants, McPherson and Sherman, told them he had intercepted dispatches from Pemberton and Johnston, and stated that decisive action would be required to prevent their junction. McPherson and Sherman did not fail him; if McClermand had acted with greater vigor, the whole Confederate Army under Pemberton might have been destroyed at Champion Hill, twenty miles east of Vicksburg.

McPherson and Sherman shared dislike of the able but insubordinate McClermand who published a report of the assault on the Vicksburg works on the 22nd of June without submitting it for Grant's approval. McClermand reflected on the services of the other army corps, claiming that he had made a lodgement in Vicksburg, but was not able to hold it because McPherson and Sherman did not do their part. This brought a hot protest from Sherman, in which McPherson joined. In his letter to Grant, McPherson wrote:

"There is a vaingloriousness about the order, an ingenious attempt to write himself down the hero, the master mind, giving life and direction to military operations in this quarter, inconsistent with the high-toned principle of the soldier *sans peur* and *sans reproche*. Though 'born a warrior,' as he himself stated, he has evidently forgotten one of the most essential qualities, viz., that elevated, refined sense of honor which, while guarding his own rights with jealous care, at all times renders justice to others."

The incident gave Grant the opportunity for which he had been patiently waiting, and the trouble-making Illinois general was relieved of his command.

The Vicksburg campaign was so brilliant and so spectacular that there were not a few who were reluctant to be-

lieve that the commonplace Grant could have been the author of such a plan. Many newspapers and many military men, especially West Point professors, fixed upon McPherson as its author and credited him with the intellect required to carry it out. However, there was no ground for this attempt to honor McPherson by discrediting Grant. McPherson played a great part, indeed, in the successive actions which led to victory at Vicksburg; but there is nothing to show that it was he who had suggested the plan to Grant. He was present at the conference of officers when Rawlins, Grant's chief of staff, first brought the plan forward, but he expressed no opinion either for or against the great project.

Only once during the Vicksburg campaign did McPherson show the slightest unmilitary attitude or disrespect toward Grant; this was subsequent to his victory over the Confederates at Raymond on May 12th. In the evening Dana and General Wilson of Grant's staff came up just as McPherson was going into camp for the night. After congratulating him on his victory, Wilson, in Grant's name, directed him to move on early in the morning to Clinton, seven miles to the northeast. To the amazement of Wilson, McPherson replied he would be "damned" if he would do any such thing, that he was not strong enough to venture so far alone, and furthermore that he didn't propose that the men of his corps should do all the fighting for the army.

Shocked at such an answer from an officer regarded by all as the ideal soldier, Wilson deliberately repeated the order and warned McPherson of the penalty of disobedience. Wheeling his horse, he galloped back in the darkness to Grant's headquarters, where he related the incident to Grant and asked him to repeat the order to McPherson in writing. Grant wrote out the order and was about to send another staff officer when Wilson asked permission to deliver it in person. He reached McPherson at midnight and gave him Grant's order to move on Clinton early in the morning; McPherson, however, took his own time and did not reach Clinton until 3 o'clock in the afternoon of the next day.

After the fall of Vicksburg, McPherson was left in command of the town. At this time he had put on his staff, without a commission, a man who claimed to have been a colonel in the Mexican Liberal Army and who was supposed to have wealthy connections in Chicago. He presented a thoroughbred horse to McPherson and a costly sword and belt to General Grant. Rawlins and Wilson advised Grant not to accept it. Not wishing to hurt McPherson's feelings, Grant accepted the sword but sent it home at once. Wilson soon discovered that the man was a rascal and swindler and so reported to both Grant and McPherson. Grant then wrote McPherson that it would be wise to dismiss this bogus colonel, but the trusting McPherson resented the interference of Wilson and Grant in his personal friendship.

McPherson's portraits at the time of the Vicksburg campaign show a very handsome face; its only defect is a somewhat flat nose. Tall in stature, he made a splendid appearance when mounted on his black charger. Everybody liked him, for he had a way of endearing himself to all those who met him. Like Howard, he was a total abstainer and an earnest Christian. His fellow officers referred to him as a "practicing Christian." His handsome presence, his kind demeanor, and his graceful, cultivated manners made him a great favorite with the ladies. Mrs. Logan, wife of General John A. Logan, one of McPherson's subordinates, wrote of him: "General McPherson was, without exception, the most unassuming and agreeable man I ever knew. True nobility characterized his conduct as a man and a gentleman."

Even the Yankee-hating women of Vicksburg were captivated with McPherson, who would sometimes sing under their windows with other officers. His popularity occasioned some talk about his loyalty, but his real friends never gave credence to such rumors. If McPherson could play the gallant to the Vicksburg ladies, he could also on occasion be severe, as was evidenced by his order expelling from the city certain women who had walked out of a Vicksburg

church when a prayer was offered for the President of the United States.

On July 7th, three days after the surrender of Vicksburg, Grant was made a major-general in the Regular Army; shortly thereafter Sherman and McPherson were similarly promoted as brigadier-generals. In thanking Grant for having recommended him for this advancement, Sherman wrote that he was not only glad to receive the promotion, but happy to think he would share this new rank with a man like McPherson. "If he lives," Sherman once said of McPherson, "he'll outdistance Grant and myself. A noble, gallant gentleman, and the best hope for a great soldier." After McPherson's untimely death, Sherman remarked that he had expected that something would happen to him and to Grant, that "either the Rebels or the newspapers would kill us both, and I looked to McPherson as the man to follow us and finish the war."

The conciliatory and reconciling influence of McPherson in the quarrels that sometimes arose in the army, especially between West Pointers and volunteers, was very great; men of all classes liked him and respected him. It is impossible to overestimate the importance of the happy, cordial, and affectionate relationship which existed between Grant, Sherman, and McPherson both in the Vicksburg campaign and afterwards. Dana was constantly with these three men at Vicksburg, and this was his verdict:

"The utmost cordiality and confidence existed between these three men, and it always seemed to me that much of the success achieved in these marches and battles was owing to this very fact. There was no jealousy or bickering, and in their unpretending simplicity they were as alike as three peas. No country was ever more faithfully, unselfishly served than was ours in the Vicksburg campaign by these three Ohio officers."

Early in March of 1864 Grant was summoned to Washington to receive the rank of lieutenant-general, recently revived by the Congress, as a reward for his great achievements at Vicksburg and Chattanooga, and to co-ordinate

the efforts of all the Union armies. In gratitude, he wrote a letter of thanks to Sherman and McPherson. Although the letter is addressed to Sherman, Grant states that he intends everything he says for McPherson also; nor does he put one on a higher plane than the other.

When Grant established his headquarters in the East with the Army of the Potomac, he appointed Sherman to command in the West and McPherson to take command of the Department of the Tennessee. These appointments placed both Sherman and McPherson over men who outranked them. Thomas outranked Sherman, and Hurlbut outranked McPherson, but both Thomas and Hurlbut cheerfully acquiesced in the appointments and did all they could to forward the common cause.

On May 4th, 1864, as Grant moved the Army of the Potomac across the Rapidan River into the gloomy defiles of the Wilderness in Virginia, Sherman led his army out of Chattanooga into Georgia in the direction of Atlanta and against the Confederate Army under Joseph E. Johnston. Sherman's host was made up of three splendid armies, commanded by very able generals. Schofield, number seven in McPherson's class of 1853 at West Point, commanded the Army of the Ohio on the right; Thomas, famous for his heroic exploit at Chickamauga, was in the center with the Army of the Cumberland, the largest of the three armies and comprising sixty thousand men; and on the left was McPherson with the Army of the Tennessee, Grant's old army.

Only once in the long and difficult campaign from Chattanooga to Atlanta was McPherson found wanting. This was in the battle before Resaca. Johnston's army lay waiting at Dalton, where he expected an attack from Sherman. However, Sherman sent McPherson with the Army of the Tennessee through Snake Gap to seize Resaca in Johnston's rear and stand in the road of his inevitable retreat from Dalton. McPherson felt out the Confederate position and decided that it was too strong to assault with the force at his disposal. Colonel W. P. C. Breckenridge, of the Ken-

tucky Cavalry Brigade, states that many of the Confederate officers regarded McPherson as the equal, and some the superior, of Sherman, and recalls that with Hood and others he stood on the hill at Resaca anxiously awaiting the threatened assault by McPherson. To their great surprise and relief, McPherson fell back at dusk. "Such an opportunity," wrote Sherman in his *Memoirs*, "does not occur twice in a single life, but at the critical moment McPherson seems to have been a little timid." The able and crafty Johnston says that McPherson acted wisely in desisting from the attack at Resaca; had he attacked, Johnston would have relinquished his hold on Dalton and thrown his entire army upon McPherson and crushed him. When Sherman met McPherson after he had failed at Resaca, members of his staff expected that he would relieve McPherson of his command, but Sherman only said sadly, "Well, Mac, you missed the great opportunity of your life."

Whoever was at fault at Resaca, never again did Sherman have occasion to complain of inaction or lack of daring on the part of McPherson and his veteran Army of the Tennessee. Because of the frequency with which Sherman marched McPherson's army around the rear of the other two Union armies to strike at the retreating Confederate Army, the Army of the Tennessee was spoken of by the soldiers as Sherman's "whiplash."

In common with others of Sherman's generals, McPherson thought the assault on Kenesaw Mountain was ill-advised. However, when Logan was speaking on the night before the battle against Sherman's order for the attack, McPherson said to him and to the other officers present: "So much the more reason that we should put our energies and hearts into carrying it out, so that it shall not fail on account of our disapproval."

Things were going well with Sherman, and his three armies were drawing closer and closer to Atlanta. About 10 o'clock on the morning of the 22nd of July, McPherson and his staff rode up to Sherman's headquarters at the Howard House. The news had come that Jefferson Davis,

disgusted with Johnston's Fabian tactics, had relieved him of his command and replaced him with the fiery Texan, John B. Hood, who had lost an arm in the Wheatfield at Gettysburg and a leg at Chickamauga. This news was received with no little satisfaction by Sherman and his generals, for although he had steadily pushed Johnston back through Georgia to Atlanta, all through the Summer Sherman had not been able to deliver a decisive blow and destroy his army; and in the one great frontal assault he had made, that at Kenesaw Mountain, he had met with a bloody repulse.

McPherson knew Hood well, for he had been a member of his and Schofield's class at West Point, standing almost at the bottom. As they sat together on the steps of the Howard House, Sherman listened to McPherson's account of Hood as a man of no great mental capacity, but as one who was daring, brave, and impetuous. They both agreed that the chances for battle were good and that they must be on their guard and prepared for an assault. Hood did not disappoint them; soon he came crashing through the woods in a fierce but futile attack.

McPherson related to Sherman that on the previous night he had gained possession of a hill overlooking the Confederate parapet, and that he was erecting a battery on the hill to bombard Atlanta and knock down a large foundry which was clearly visible. Sherman expressed his satisfaction with the plan, and walked with McPherson some distance down the road; sitting down at the foot of a tree, he produced a map and pointed out the positions held by Thomas's army and by his own. Sherman planned once more to use McPherson's army as a "whiplash," shifting it by the rear completely around to the right of Thomas. As the two talked together in this, their last meeting on earth, they could hear the firing of skirmishers on their front; occasionally a sporadic round shot came singing through the trees about them.

Presently the firing increased in volume and a few shots were heard from the direction of Decatur. Sherman consulted the pocket compass which he always carried; noting



the direction from which the sound came, he asked McPherson its meaning. McPherson could offer no explanation, but said he would seek one. Springing to his feet, he put his papers into a wallet and pushed it into his breast pocket; then he mounted his horse and rode off with his staff, calling back to Sherman that he would inspect his lines to learn the meaning of the commotion and would report back. Sherman never forgot the last look he had of his friend: handsome in his major-general's uniform, with gauntlets on his hands, wearing a sword belt but no sword, and his boots outside his pantaloons.

After McPherson had left, Sherman sent orders to Schofield to send a brigade back to Decatur. He was walking up and down the porch of the Howard House, listening to the firing, but not much disturbed by it because of his confidence in his three generals, when one of McPherson's staff, his horse lathered with sweat, came galloping up to the porch and cried out that General McPherson was either "killed or a prisoner." He related that McPherson, riding along his lines and estimating the situation, had sent off staff officers with orders to Dodge and other generals hurriedly to bring up reinforcements. Then, alone or almost alone, he had taken a road leading back of the Seventeenth Corps and had disappeared in the forest. There was a crash of musketry, and in a moment McPherson's well-known black charger came running back, wounded and riderless.

Sherman sent the officer to find Logan, next in rank to McPherson in the Army of the Tennessee, tell him of McPherson's death, and order him to drive back the enemy. He also sent one of his own staff to Logan with the same instructions, adding that he need not worry about his rear, for he himself would cover that. A message was also dispatched to Thomas, informing him of Hood's sally, and ordering him to take advantage of this weakening of the Confederate line on his front and push into Atlanta.

In the space of an hour an ambulance came bearing the body of McPherson. Sherman had it carried into the

Howard House and laid on a door which was wrenched from its hinges. An army surgeon, Dr. Hewitt, was present and Sherman asked him to examine the body. This he did with Sherman looking on, the house shaking with the sound of the firing, and an occasional shot striking its walls. Sherman paced up and down the room, pausing to give an occasional order, to receive a report, or to gaze at his dead friend while the tears streamed down his face.

Dr. Hewitt opened the coat and shirt and traced the course of the bullet; it had ranged upward across the body and passed near the heart. McPherson must have died a few minutes after he was shot. Sherman noted that he was dressed as he had last seen him when he rode off an hour before, but that his wallet, with an important letter that Sherman had written to him that morning, was missing. The wallet and its contents were soon found in the haversack of a Confederate prisoner captured near the spot where McPherson fell. The firing about the Howard House became so heavy that Sherman feared the building would take fire and directed two of McPherson's staff to carry the body back to Marietta. As Sherman rode to his headquarters from the Atlanta battlefield late on the day on which McPherson fell, he said to the officers with him: "I had expected him to finish the war. Grant and I are likely to be killed or set aside after some failure to meet popular expectation, and McPherson would have come into chief command at the right time to end the war. He had no enemies."

Fourteen years later, Sherman learned for the first time how McPherson met his death; apparently, there were no eyewitnesses among the Union officers or soldiers. A letter from one of McPherson's orderlies, A. C. Thompson of the Fourth Ohio, gave the facts. McPherson and he were galloping down the woody defile when a group of Confederate soldiers appeared and called upon them to halt. McPherson checked his horse and raised his hat as if to salute them; then, wheeling his horse to the right, he attempted to escape. There was an immediate crash of

musketry. The orderly struck his head against a tree as he rode and lay senseless for a few moments on the ground. When he recovered, he saw McPherson lying on his right side, with his left hand on his leg and his right hand on his breast. The orderly called to ask if he was hurt; McPherson answered, "Oh, orderly, I am." He was about to lift up his fallen chief when a Confederate soldier seized him and with curses ordered him to the rear.

So passed McPherson. They buried him in the apple orchard of the Ohio home about which he used to play as a boy. Grant wept when he received the news in Virginia. To Porter he said:

"McPherson was one of my earliest staff officers, and seemed almost like one of my own family. At Donelson, Shiloh, Vicksburg, and Chattanooga he performed splendid service. I predicted from the start that he would make one of the most brilliant officers in the service. I was very reluctant to have him leave my staff, for I disliked to lose his services there, but I felt that it was only fair to him to put him in command of troops where he would be in the line of more rapid promotion. I was very glad to have him at the head of my old Army of the Tennessee. His death will be a terrible loss to Sherman, for I know that he will feel it as keenly as I. McPherson was beloved by everybody in the service, both by those above him and by those below him."

Rawlins, too, was heartbroken. To his wife, he wrote:

"News from Sherman today brings sad intelligence that Major General J. B. McPherson was killed yesterday by a bullet through his lungs, fired from the enemy's works while he was making a reconnoissance of them. McPherson, my friend, with whom I have shared the same blanket, messed at the same board, endured the fatigue of the march, the exposures of the storm and faced dangers of battle. Brave, patriotic and gifted, his country will weep his loss as irreparable, and every friend of freedom will find for him a tear. My mind would be to say more of him, but I have not the command of language to do justice to his worth and fame . . ."

Schofield, commander of the Army of the Ohio, who had been McPherson's roommate at West Point, said of him: "His was the most completely balanced mind and character with which I have ever been intimately acquainted."

General John B. Hood paid the tribute of sincere friendship to his classmate at West Point:

"Although in the same class, I was several years his junior, and unlike him was more wedded to boyish sports than to books. Often when we were cadets have I left the barracks at night to participate in some merrymaking, and early the next morning have had recourse to him to help me over the difficult portions of my study for the day. Neither the lapse of years, nor the difference of sentiment which led us to range ourselves on opposite sides in the War had lessened my friendship. His acts were ever characterized by those gentlemanly qualities which distinguished him as a boy. No soldier fell in the enemy's ranks whose death caused me equal regret."

McPherson's grandmother, Lydia Slocum, eighty-seven years of age, having heard that General Grant wept when the news was brought to him at City Point of McPherson's death, wrote him this letter:

"I hope you will pardon me for troubling you with the perusal of these few lines from the trembling hand of the aged grandmother of our beloved General James B. McPherson, who fell in battle. When it was announced at the funeral from the public prints, that when General Grant heard of his death he went into his tent and wept like a child, my heart went out in thanks to you for the interest you manifested in him while he was with you . . .

"His funeral services were attended in his mother's orchard, where his youthful feet had often pressed the soil to gather fruit, and his remains are resting in the silent grave, scarce half a mile from the place of his birth . . ."

The letter touched Grant, and he responded in his best mood:

"Your very welcome letter of the third instant has reached me. I am glad to know the relatives of the lament-

ed Major-General McPherson are aware of the more than friendship existing between him and myself. A nation grieves at the loss of one so dear to our nation's cause. It is a selfish grief, because the nation had more to expect from him than from almost anyone living. I join in this selfish grief, and add the grief of personal love for the departed. He formed for some time one of my military family. I knew him well, and to know him was but to love him.

"It may be some consolation to you, his aged grandmother, to know that every officer and every soldier who served under your grandson felt the highest reverence for his patriotism, his zeal, his great, almost unequaled ability, his amiability, and all the manly virtues that can adorn a commander. Your bereavement is great, but cannot exceed mine."

In his official report of his friend's death Sherman said: "General McPherson fell in battle, booted and spurred, as a gallant knight should wish. History tells us of but few who so blended the grace and gentleness of the friend with the dignity, courage, faithfulness and manliness of the soldier."

At the time of his death McPherson was looking forward to a furlough in order that he might marry Miss Mary Hoffman of Baltimore, for among the many whom he charmed, this was the woman he loved. He had confided to Sherman that he was engaged to Miss Hoffman and that he would like a furlough so that he might marry before the Spring campaign of 1864 opened. Sherman was glad to accommodate him, but told him to be sure to return from Baltimore before the campaign opened. This, however, was before Sherman had met Grant at Nashville; as things were now moving quickly, Sherman felt that he could not dispense with McPherson's services, even for a brief furlough. "Mac," he said, "it wrings my heart, but you can't go now."

A few days before his death, McPherson spoke to Schofield of his plans for marriage and wondered when he might look forward to receiving a furlough. Schofield replied he would probably be free to visit Baltimore after the fall of Atlanta. As that seemed imminent, McPherson was

in high spirits on the morning of July 22<sup>nd</sup>; that day he fell in battle and the marriage was forever postponed. Sherman, who always regretted that he had not granted him leave, wrote a kind letter to his fiancée in Baltimore, explaining his reasons for denying McPherson permission to wed the previous December.

Now McPherson slept in death's long and unbroken furlough.

# 4

## Grant and Rawlins

In front of the Capitol at Washington stands the magnificent equestrian statue of General Grant, flanked on either side by artillery, cavalry, and infantry and reproducing stirring scenes from the forefronts of the hottest battles. In Rawlins Park on E Street, just off Pennsylvania Avenue, there stands the very modest statue of General John A. Rawlins. He who looks with discerning eye upon the great memorial to Grant will not forget the other monument on E Street; without the help of Rawlins Grant could hardly have risen to the heights or, having scaled them, maintained his eminent position. Rawlins was the man who kept Grant on his horse.

In a letter to the chairman of the Senate Committee on Military Affairs, asking for the promotion of Rawlins to the rank of brigadier-general in the Regular Army, Grant said: "General Rawlins has served with me from the beginning of the rebellion. I know he has most richly earned his present position. He comes the nearest to being indispensable to me of any officer in the service." He was "indispensable" to Grant, not because he was learned in military administration or organization or because of his abilities as a soldier, but because of his character, his never-wavering loyalty, and the influence he had upon Grant's personal conduct. So great was that influence that it is impossible to think of Grant without Rawlins. Where

Grant was weak, Rawlins was strong. Indeed, General James H. Wilson, who had much to do with both Grant and Rawlins, went so far as to say that "the great character which has passed into history under the name of Grant was compounded both of Grant and Rawlins in nearly equal parts."

John Aaron Rawlins, second child in a family of eight brothers and one sister, was born at East Galena, Illinois, on February 13th, 1831. His father was one of the first to reach California in the gold rush, and for a number of years was an adventurous but unsuccessful seeker after gold. While he was in the West the maintenance of the family of nine devolved almost entirely upon the mother and her son John. In the Black Hawk War young Rawlins was engaged in hauling supplies for the troops; thereafter he returned to hard labor as a charcoal burner and farmer. His lifelong opposition to drinking was said to be due to the unfortunate example set by his father. His dislike of liquor amounted to a fierce hatred, and he frequently declared that he would rather see a friend take a glass of poison than a glass of whiskey.

Rawlins's schooling was brief. He had eight terms of three months each in the country schools, and a year in Rock River Seminary at Mount Morris, Illinois, where he had for a fellow student Shelby B. Cullom, in later years the distinguished senator from Illinois. After leaving the seminary, he read law with Isaac P. Stephens, a well-known attorney of Galena, who took the young man into partnership. Rawlins's rise at the bar was rapid; he soon acquired a remunerative practice and was well-known throughout the county as a man of ability and promise.

On Tuesday evening, April 16th, two days after the fall of Fort Sumter, a mass meeting of citizens was held in the Court House at Galena. The Democratic mayor of the town presided and made a speech of a compromising nature which resulted in great disorder and violent protest. Elihu Washburne, the Republican member of Congress for that district, made a stirring address, calling upon the

At the  
age of  
one



people to uphold the President, the Constitution, and the Union. When Washburne had finished there were loud cries of "Rawlins! Rawlins!" Rawlins, then thirty years of age, pushed his way through the throng. Pale and shaking with excitement, eyes flashing in anger, and in a voice which carried throughout the hall, he denounced the firing upon Sumter, called upon his fellow-citizens to uphold the government, and concluded with these words: "I have been a Democrat all my life. But this is no longer a question of politics. It is simply union or disunion, country or no country. I have favored every honorable compromise, but the day for compromise is past. Only one course is left for us. We will stand by the flag of our country and appeal to the God of battles."

Standing in the back of the hall was a man of ordinary appearance; thirty-nine years of age, an ex-captain in the regular army, he was now employed as a clerk in his brother's store at a salary of six hundred dollars a year. In thirty-one days the shabby clerk in the tannery shop would be a brigadier-general of volunteers and the eloquent young attorney his assistant adjutant-general.

Friends of Rawlins, who was a Democrat, had said to him on the way to the meeting that night: "It is an abolition fight. Do not mix in. If you do you will injure our party." "I don't know anything about party now," replied Rawlins; "all I know is traitors have fired upon our flag." Walking home from that memorable meeting, Grant said to his brother Orvil, "I think I ought to go into the service." "I think so, too," replied his brother. "Go if you like, and I will stay at home and attend to the store."

Through the influence of Washburne, Grant was appointed a brigadier-general of volunteers and on August 30th, 1861 selected the Galena lawyer Rawlins as his assistant adjutant. Rawlins was only one of a group of Galena men who served with Grant in the war. Dr. Edward Kittoe, an Englishman by birth and a neighbor of Grant, became his surgeon and medical director of the Army of the Tennessee with the rank of lieutenant-colonel. Another Galena

no  
it  
was  
dated  
back

man on Grant's staff was Lieutenant-Colonel William R. Rowley, a military secretary; because of ill health he resigned his post on August 30th, 1864. He was succeeded by Captain Ely S. Parker. Parker was a full-blooded Indian, a grandnephew of the noted Red Jacket. He had received a good education as a civil engineer and was employed by the government at Galena at the outbreak of the war. His race made it impossible for him to obtain a commission from the Governor of New York or from the Secretary of War, who stated that the conflict would be won by the whites without the help of the Indians. In 1863, however, he was commissioned a captain of engineers and the next year was appointed lieutenant-colonel and military secretary to Grant. When Lee surrendered at Appomattox the senior adjutant-general, Colonel Theodore S. Bowers, was so excited and agitated by the magnitude of the event that he was unable to write; and at Grant's request Parker drew up the terms of surrender. When Grant presented his staff to Lee, a look of astonishment came over the Southern commander's face when Parker was introduced; his swarthiness evidently gave Lee the impression that he was a Negro.

Rawlins reported to Grant at Cairo on September 14th, 1861. He was then thirty years of age, of medium stature and weight, with black hair, black eyes, swarthy complexion, and colorless cheeks. He spoke with a low and well-modulated voice, but when roused could speak with intense energy and earnestness, and on occasions was profane. He did the work of adjutant-general, quartermaster, and commissary and ordnance officer. From the very beginning of their association Rawlins was of invaluable aid to Grant, who up to that time had himself performed a great deal of the detailed staff work. Rawlins took charge of all this and not only worked hard himself, but saw to it that others carried their share. He had a keen insight into character and detested evil men. The worthless drinking officers who surrounded Grant at that time were gradually weeded out and disappeared from the staff. On September 6th, 1861, Grant

occupied Paducah and Smithland on the lower Ohio in western Kentucky, and on November 7th he fought the successful battle of Belmont on the Missouri side of the Mississippi. Up to that time Kentucky had been maintaining what it called an "armed neutrality." Rawlins denounced this as "absolute hostility to the government" and urged Grant to disregard it completely. Grant followed his advice and acted with boldness and dispatch.

After Belmont the rumors of Grant's drinking became rife, and stories concerning his resignation from the Regular Army in 1854 were set in circulation. These reports reached Elihu Washburne, Grant's sponsor and political backer at Washington. Feeling a sense of responsibility because he had arranged Grant's commission, Washburne wrote to Rawlins in quest of information. Rawlins replied as follows:

"I will answer your inquiry fully and frankly, but first I would say unequivocally and emphatically that the statement that General Grant is drinking very hard is utterly untrue and could have originated only in malice.

"When I came to Cairo, General Grant was, as he is today, a strictly total abstinence man, and I have been informed by those who knew him well, that such has been his habit for the last five or six years . . .

"But no man can say that at any time since I have been with him has he drunk liquor enough to in the slightest unfit him for business, or make it manifest in his words or actions. At the time I have referred to, continuing probably a week or ten days, he may have taken an occasional drink with those gentlemen and others visiting Cairo at that time, but never in a single instance to excess, and at the end of that period he voluntarily stated he should not during the continuance of the war again taste liquor of any kind, and for the past three weeks, though to my knowledge frequently importuned on visits of friends, he has not tasted any kind of liquor . . .

"If you could look into General Grant's countenance at this moment you would want no other assurance of his

sobriety. He is in perfect health, and his eye and intellect are as clear and active as can be . . .

"None can feel a greater interest in General Grant than I do; I regard his interest as my interest, all that concerns his reputation concerns me; I love him as a father; I respect him because I have studied him well, and the more I know him the more I respect and love him . . .

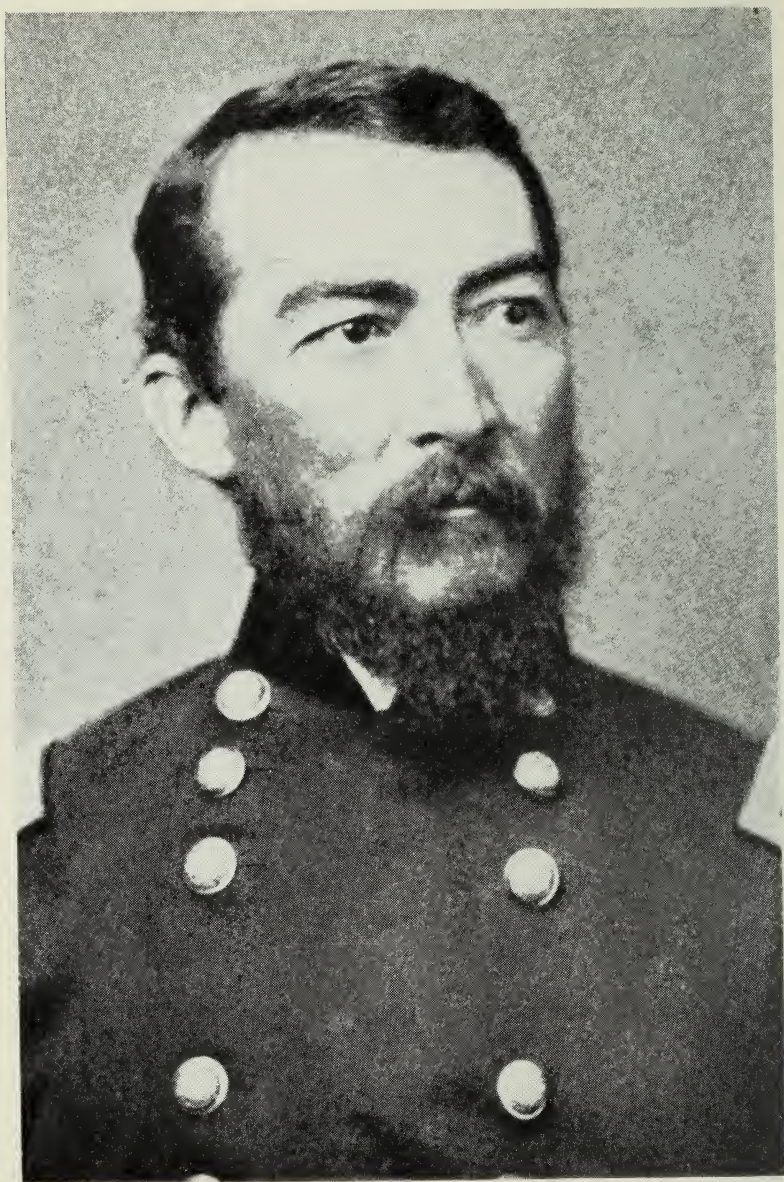
"But I say to you frankly, and I pledge you my word for it, that should General Grant at any time become an intemperate man or an habitual drunkard, I will notify you immediately, will ask to be removed from duty on his staff (kind as he has been to me), or resign my commission. For while there are times when I would gladly throw the mantle of charity over the faults of friends, at this time, and from a man in his position, I would rather tear the mantle off and expose the deformity . . . "

That last sentence of the letter is a window into the soul of Rawlins. There spoke the intense patriot, the upright citizen, and the true friend. It was about this time that Rawlins secured from Grant his promise not to touch a drop of liquor as long as the war lasted. Grant, as we shall see, did not keep his promise; but his deviation from the path of total abstinence and temperance might have been fraught with far more serious consequences for the country had it not been for the watchful eye of the faithful and patriotic Rawlins. Rawlins showed Grant's pledge of total abstinence to Wilson, also a total abstainer, who joined Grant's staff at LaGrange, Tennessee in November of 1862. He suggested that they form "an offensive and defensive alliance" to dispense with drinking, worthless officers, guard Grant against a fall, and maintain him in the discharge of his great duties.

Rawlins was at Grant's side at Belmont, at Fort Henry, at Fort Donelson, and in the bloody battle of Shiloh in April of 1862. He was one of the officers dispatched during the critical hours of the first day's battle at Shiloh to bring up the veteran corps of General Lew Wallace. Rawlins always maintained that, regardless of orders or the condition of his men, Wallace was greatly at fault in taking



Ulysses S. Grant who became general-in-chief in his early forties. Tolerant and understanding, he nevertheless never re-appointed a subordinate whom he had dismissed. With Lincoln he shared an unalterable conviction of the Republic's eventual survival.



Philip H. Sheridan — Grant heaped more praise on him than on any other commander. His career almost terminated by a display of temper at West Point, he went on to defeat Jeb Stuart in battle and became the hero of Thomas B. Reed's famous poem, "Sheridan's Ride."

so long a time to reach the scene of a battle the thunders of which he had been hearing all that day. During the period of Grant's eclipse after the battle of Shiloh, when he was practically shelved by Halleck and was about to ask to be relieved, Rawlins stood loyally by his chief and, together with Sherman, persuaded Grant to remain, in the hope that conditions would soon improve. This hope was fulfilled when Halleck was called to Washington as general-in-chief, and Grant again assumed active command of the Army of the Tennessee.

Rawlins played a most important part in the campaign against Vicksburg. It was Wilson who first suggested the plan which Grant finally adopted, that of running the batteries with the gunboats and transports and then taking the troops across the Mississippi south of Vicksburg and attacking the city from the rear. However, it was due to Rawlins and his strong powers of persuasion that Grant adopted the plan which achieved success. Charles A. Dana, who joined Grant at that time as the representative of Stanton and the War Department, wrote his chief describing Rawlins in these words:

“Lieutenant-Colonel Rawlins, Grant's assistant adjutant-general, is a very industrious, conscientious man, who never loses a moment, and never gives himself any indulgence except swearing and scolding. He is a lawyer by profession, a townsman of Grant's, and has a great influence over him, especially because he watches him day and night, and whenever he commits the folly of tasting liquor hastens to remind him that at the beginning of the war he gave him his word of honor not to touch a drop as long as it lasted. Grant thinks Rawlins a first-rate adjutant, but I think this is a mistake. He is too slow, and can't write the English language correctly without a great deal of careful consideration. Indeed, illiterateness is a general characteristic of Grant's staff, and, in fact, of Grant's generals and regimental officers of all ranks.”

By 1864, and through longer association, Dana had come to have a higher opinion of Rawlins. In a letter

written to General Wilson from Nashville he says of Rawlins:

"His loss would be a great misfortune, not only for his friends, but still more for the country. Public servants of his quality will always be few. There are plenty of men whose names will flourish largely in history without having rendered a tithe of his unostentatious and invaluable contributions to the great work of the nation."

Up to the time of the Vicksburg campaign, Grant's reports to the government were brief and indifferent; with the aid of Rawlins, however, they became careful, lucid, and complete. Major Bowers, a Galena newspaperman who became Rawlins's assistant, was partly responsible for the change. Rawlins worked out a plan under which Grant sketched with his own hand a brief outline of occurrences and turned it over to his assistants to verify and expand.

Sometimes, in the intensity of his feelings and in the ardor of his patriotism, Rawlins took great liberties with his commander. When one of Grant's kinsmen bearing a permit from the Secretary of the Treasury came to Vicksburg to trade in cotton, Rawlins expelled him from the department in accordance with a standing order forbidding traffic in this commodity because of its bad influence on the soldiers and officers. Grant suggested to Rawlins that the order of expulsion was somewhat harsh. Thereupon Rawlins erupted with a volley of oaths and declared that, if his and Grant's positions were reversed, he would arrest his own relative and hang him to the highest tree within five miles of the camp.

Wilson was present at this outbreak; when Rawlins had slammed the door and departed, Wilson pursued him and expostulated, telling him that his language and his actions were insubordinate and inexcusable. At this Rawlins said: "You were right. I am already ashamed of myself for losing my temper. Come with me." When they had gone back to Grant's office, Rawlins said: "General, I have just used rough and violent language in your presence, which I should not have used; and I not only want to withdraw it, but to



humbly beg your pardon for it." Then he added, blushing, "The fact is, General, when I made the acquaintance of the ladies at our headquarters I resolved to give up the use of profane language, and damn my soul, if I didn't think I had done it."

At this Grant responded with a smile: "That's all right, Rawlins, I understand you were not cursing, but like Wilson's friend, simply 'expressing your intense vehemence on the subject matter.'" The reference was to General McClernand and his reaction when Wilson delivered an order from his commander. When called to task by Wilson, McClernand apologized and rationalized his conduct in the phrase quoted by Grant.

After the successful battles between Vicksburg and Jackson had been fought and the Union Army had thrown its cordon of steel about the river fortress, Grant relapsed into an intemperance due, his friends thought, to the long strain of hard work and exposure. Rawlins soon learned the facts and at 1 o'clock on the morning of June 6th, 1863, sat down and wrote Grant a letter which was not made public until after the death of both men. It is one of the most remarkable documents of the Civil War, and we give it in full:

"The great solicitude I feel for the safety of this army leads me to mention, what I had hoped never again to do, the subject of your drinking. This may surprise you, for I may be, and trust I am, doing you an injustice by unfounded suspicion, but if in error, it had better be on the side of the country's safety than in fear of offending a friend.

"I have heard that Dr. McMillan at General Sherman's a few days ago induced you, notwithstanding your pledge to me, to take a glass of wine, and today when I found a box of wine in front of your tent, and proposed to move it, which I did, I was told you had forbid its being taken away, for you intended to keep it until you entered Vicksburg, that you might have it for your friends; and tonight, when you should, because of the condition of your health, if nothing else, have been in bed, I find you where the wine bottle has just been

emptied, in company with those who drink and urge you to do likewise; and the lack of your usual promptness and decision, and clearness of expressing yourself in writing, conduces to confirm my suspicion.

"You have the full control over your appetite, and can let drinking alone. Had you not pledged me the sincerity of your honor early last March, that you would drink no more during the war, and kept that pledge during your recent campaign, you would not today have stood first in the world's history as a successful military leader. Your only salvation depends upon your strict adherence to that pledge. You cannot succeed in any other way . . .

"As I have before stated, I may be wrong in my suspicions, but if one sees that which leads him to suppose a sentinel is falling asleep on his post, it is his duty to arouse him; and if one sees that which leads him to fear the General commanding a great army is being seduced to that step which he knows will bring disgrace upon that General and defeat upon his command, if he fails to sound the proper note of warning, the friends, wives and children of those brave men whose lives he permits to remain thus in peril, will accuse him while he lives, and stand swift witnesses of wrath against him in the day when all shall be tried.

"If my suspicions are unfounded, let my friendship for you and my zeal for my country be my excuse for this letter; and if they are correctly founded, and you determine not to heed the admonitions and prayers of this hasty note, by immediately ceasing to touch a single drop of any kind of liquor, no matter by whom asked or under what circumstances, let my immediate relief from duty in this department be the result."

Deeply moved, Rawlins told Wilson and Bowers, who was his inseparable companion and principal assistant throughout the war, what he had done. He later told McPherson and Sherman also about the letter and the occasion for it. The morning after writing this letter, Rawlins personally inspected the tents at army headquarters, and crashed against a nearby tree every bottle he uncovered.

Another who was indeed a wise friend to Grant at this critical time in the Vicksburg campaign when the general was lapsing into intemperance, was Charles A. Dana, sent down to Vicksburg by the Secretary of War to report on Grant, his habits, and his campaign. One morning Grant inquired: "Mr. Dana, I am going to Sartaria today; would you like to go along?"

Dana replied in the affirmative, and they rode with a cavalry guard to Haynes' Bluff to board a small steamer. Soon after the boat started, Grant became "ill" and went to bed in his stateroom. When the boat was just a few miles from Sartaria, gunboat officers came on board to inform Dana that the Union troops had retreated from Sartaria and that the town was then probably occupied by the Confederates. The officers insisted that Dana wake Grant and tell him it was not safe to proceed. Dana finally did so, but found Grant "too sick to decide." "I will leave it to you," he said. Dana then, on his own responsibility, ordered the boat back to Haynes' Bluff. The next morning, Grant, "fresh as a rose, clean shirt and all," came out to breakfast and said to Dana, "Well, Mr. Dana, I suppose we are at Sartaria now." "No, General," said Dana, "we are at Haynes' Bluff." Grant made no complaint when informed of the previous day's occurrences.

There is no doubt as to the cause of Grant's "sickness," for it occurred at the same time that Rawlins wrote Grant his memorable letter of remonstrance. Dana had been prepared for such an event by the confidence which Rawlins and Wilson had reposed in him. It was fortunate for Grant that he had so wise and true a friend in Dana at a time when the government was so inquisitive about his personal habits. A commanding general who was so indisposed that he could not judge whether it was safe to have his steamer proceed, and who had no recollection of the event on the following day, was indeed a cause of anxiety to his best friends; it is not strange that Rawlins, proceeding on the theory that "faithful are the wounds of a friend," wrote him his remarkable letter.

After the war Grant spoke of his chief of staff as "an able man, possessed of great firmness, who could say 'no' so emphatically to a request which he thought should not be granted, that the person he was addressing would understand at once there was no use pressing the matter." Rawlins could say "no" for himself; by his example he taught and encouraged Grant to say "no" when occasion demanded. In his intercourse with Grant, Rawlins used great freedom and boldness of speech. Just before Appomattox, when he feared that Grant intended to confer with Lee about terms of peace rather than the surrender of his army, he said to Grant, "You have no right to meet Lee or anyone else to arrange terms of peace. That is the prerogative of the President or the Senate. Your business is to capture or destroy Lee's army."

In ordinary address Grant was accustomed to call Rawlins, Sherman, and Sheridan by their last names; however, in addressing Meade and most of the higher officers, he would preface this with the title "General." In both public and private intercourse, Sheridan always called his commander "Grant."

A man of great severity, Rawlins was also capable of deep emotion. During the Vicksburg campaign he was riding one day with Logan and Dana over the battlefield of Champion Hill, where the dead and wounded were still lying where they had fallen. Suddenly a wounded Confederate officer raised himself on his elbow and called out, "For God's sake, gentlemen, is there a Mason among you?" "Yes," said Rawlins, "I am a Mason." He then dismounted and kneeled by the side of the dying man, who gave him some letters and other tokens of remembrance to send to his wife in Alabama. When Rawlins remounted, there were tears upon his cheeks.

After the surrender of Vicksburg, Rawlins strongly opposed Grant's plan to parole the Confederate prisoners and urged that they be sent North as prisoners of war. His advice was proven sound when a few weeks later the Confederate Government repudiated the terms of capitula-

tion and ordered the paroled troops to rejoin their units. When the official reports of the Vicksburg campaign had been prepared, Grant sent Rawlins to Washington to carry dispatches and the roll of prisoners captured at Vicksburg. In his letter to Lincoln asking that the President receive Rawlins, Grant wrote: "He has not a favor to ask for himself or any other living being. Even in my position it is a great luxury to meet a gentleman who has no ax to grind, and I can appreciate that it is infinitely more so in yours."

Rawlins received a warm welcome from Lincoln and spent two hours with the President and his cabinet, telling them of men and events at Vicksburg. Even the caustic Secretary of the Navy, Gideon Welles, who thrust his barbs into nearly all his contemporaries, had a favorable impression of Rawlins. On July 31st, 1863 he wrote:

"I met at the President's and was introduced by him to Colonel Rawlins of General Grant's staff. I was much pleased with him, his frank, intelligent and interesting description of men and accounts of army operations. His interview with the President and the Cabinet was of nearly two hours' duration, and all I think were entertained by him. His honest, unpretending, and unassuming manners pleased me. The absence of pretension and, I may say, the unpolished and unrefined deportment of this earnest and sincere man, patriot and soldier, pleased me more than that of almost any officer whom I have met."

About the time Rawlins first joined Grant's staff, his wife died after a long illness of tuberculosis, leaving three young children. The seeds of the dread disease must have been implanted in his body at the time of his wife's illness, for Rawlins himself suffered from tuberculosis during the last part of the war and fell a victim to it in 1869. Rawlins was so serious, earnest, and industrious and so preoccupied with military matters that his friends were both surprised and pleased when he fell in love with Mary Emma Hurlbut of Danbury, Connecticut, a governess in the Vicksburg family in whose home Grant had established his headquar-

ters. This young lady had become the object of attentions from some of the officers on Grant's staff and was receiving anonymous bouquets. Wilson discovered that these came from a married lieutenant-colonel of the staff, and so informed Rawlins, who put an end to the annoyance and denounced the officer in scorching words. Soon thereafter Grant, with the least desirable members of his staff and against the will of Rawlins, set out for New Orleans to visit General Banks; this left Rawlins in charge of the household. Rawlins was an exceedingly shy man and avoided feminine company, but he quickly succumbed to the charms of the pretty Connecticut governess, and they were married on the 23rd of December, 1863, at Danbury. Wilson relates that it was a pleasure to all of Grant's staff "to see this strong and rugged man softened and humanized by the smiles of a beautiful and interesting woman."

In his ardent love letters to Emma Hurlbut, written before their marriage, the gruff and profane Rawlins reveals the tender and poetic side of his nature. In a letter written at Nashville when he was traveling with Grant and the staff to Chattanooga, he says: "Oh, how much I desire to see you, Emma; to hear your merry, girlish laughter and listen to the sweet, silvery-toned cadences of thy loved voice that ever reached my heart and made me forget all else save thy loved presence." Describing his surroundings at night when he was with the army at Chattanooga, he wrote to her: "The campfires of the Union forces blaze brightly in the defenses of Chattanooga, while those of the Confederates, like not distant burning stars, illuminate the mountain round and south of it."

In his letters to Emma at this time we find confidential and very interesting comments on Grant and his abilities and shortcomings. Writing on November 23rd, the day of the first battle at Chattanooga, he thus characterized Grant: "Of his merits and demerits no one perhaps can speak more advisedly than myself, and I feel that he is equal to the requirements of his present position. As a commander of troops in the field he has no superior. There are those who

in the exercise of a quasi-civil, as well as military, command, are far his superiors. His simple, honest, and confiding nature unfits him for contact with the shrewd civilian who would take advantage of unsuspecting honesty. Hence, my aversion, as you remember, to having headquarters in cities. His true position is in the field, in the immediate command of troops. There he will shine without a superior."

In this same letter Rawlins gives us a very interesting and very important comment on the relationship of Grant with Rosecrans, whom Grant had just displaced as commander of the Army of the Cumberland in favor of General Thomas:

"One thing is very certain; while General Grant is no enemy of General Rosecrans, as some of our papers seem to be impressed he is, he could not in justice to himself and the cause of his country think of again commanding General Rosecrans after his experience with him in the Summer and Fall of 1862. Of this the authorities in Washington were fully advised in General Grant's report of the battles of Iuka and Corinth, in the former of which, in consequence of his [Rosecrans's] deviation from the entire plan and order of battle, the enemy was enabled to escape, and by his tardiness in pursuit in the latter allowed to get off with much less loss than he should. To this might be added his general spirit of insubordination toward General Grant, although to his face he professed for him the highest regard, both as a man and officer. That it was necessary for someone abler than General Rosecrans to have the direction of matters here was too apparent to every military mind in the army to elicit questions. The fact is when we reached here the future of the army was suspended by a single thread, and that the line of its supplies, which was a road leading from Bridgeport, Alabama, through the Sequatchie Valley and over the mountains to Chattanooga, a distance of sixty miles, the valley road the muddiest and the mountain road the roughest and steepest of ascent and descent ever passed over by army wagons and mules."

Referring to the fact that Rosecrans had left the field

during the battle of Chickamauga and returned to Chattanooga, Rawlins wrote to Emma: "Of one thing this country may be assured. When General Grant leaves the field of battle under the impression all is lost, there will remain no heroic Thomas to give a different coloring to that impression." In that somewhat ironical comment on Rosecrans, Rawlins revealed the truth about Grant as a commander. Had he ever left the field, no subordinate commander would have remained behind to fight a battle and win the glory as Thomas did after Rosecrans abandoned Chickamauga; had Grant quit a field of battle, which he never did and never contemplated, it could have been only because further fighting was impossible.

At the time Grant was summoned to Chattanooga to save the army after the disastrous battle of Chickamauga, he met the anxious Stanton at Louisville. After discussing matters, Stanton retired, but Grant and most of his staff departed for the theater. Rawlins considered this an unseemly and undignified act at a time of great crisis and he did not hesitate to express his opinion. He had a deep sense of the great responsibilities which now rested upon Grant and considered it "a time for penance and prayer rather than for enjoyment, however innocent."

When Grant was on his way to Chattanooga from Nashville and had reached the end of the railroad, General Hooker, who had hurriedly come west with the Eleventh Corps of the Army of the Potomac, sent word that he was unwell and would like to have his commander call on him at his headquarters. The two men had been associated years before at Fort Vancouver, but had not seen one another since the outbreak of the war. Rawlins frankly and deeply resented this unseemly message and informed Hooker's messenger: "General Grant himself is not very well and will not leave his car tonight. He expects General Hooker and all other generals who have business with him to call at once, and he will start overland to Chattanooga early tomorrow morning."

Grant lapsed into intemperance shortly before his great



victory at Chattanooga. On November 16th, 1863 Rawlins wrote to his fiancée that he had hoped to visit her by the first of the coming year, but that he must now defer the trip because of certain conditions at headquarters:

"Today, however, matters have changed and the necessity of my presence here made almost absolute by the free use of intoxicating liquors at Head Quarters, which last night's developments showed me had reached to the General commanding. I am the only one here (his wife not being with him) who can stay it in that direction & prevent evil consequences resulting from it. I had hoped, but it appears vainly, his New Orleans experience would prevent him ever again indulging with this, his worst enemy."<sup>1</sup>

Rawlins then tells his "dearest Emma" that he would try to shorten the time of their separation "by persuading the General to send for his spouse. If she be with him, all will be well, and I can be spared."

Answering Rawlins's letter with expressions of passionate devotion, Emma Hurlbut wrote:

"It was with the deepest regret that I heard of his again yielding to the temptation, that the poisonous serpent is again encircling him in his deadly folds. How can he in his high position holding the lives of 10,000 in his hands & when so much depends on him, how dare he do anything that would render him incompetent or unfit for the important duties of his position. It is truly honorable if you can try to stop the destruction which threatens him. It is your duty to remain with him."

After Grant was made lieutenant-general in March of 1864, his name was discussed as a possible nominee for the Presidency. Wilson wrote to Rawlins that he considered this unfortunate and that it would be well for Grant to let it be known that he would not allow his name to be used in any way as an opponent of Lincoln in the coming election. Rawlins replied:

"I cannot conceive how the use of General Grant's

---

<sup>1</sup> Here Rawlins refers to Grant's fall from his horse during a review of troops at New Orleans.

name in connection with the Presidency can result in harm to him or our cause, for if there is a man in the United States who is unambitious of such honor, it is certainly he, yet the matter is not in such a shape as to justify him in writing a letter declining to be a candidate for the Presidency. The nomination for the office has not been tendered him by the people; nor has it by either of the great political parties or any portion thereof . . . To write a letter of declination now, would place him much in the position of the old maid who had never had an offer declaring she 'would never marry.'

" . . . The Honorable E. B. Washburne, I am sure, is not in favor of Grant for the Presidency. He is for Mr. Lincoln, and if he has made use of the language imputed to him, it has been to further the passage of his Lieutenant-Generaley bill; nothing more I am certain. This is my own opinion. That Washburne should seemingly arrogate to himself the exclusive championship of the General, is not at all strange when we reflect upon the fact that two years ago he was the only man in Congress who had a voice of condemnation for the General's maligners. His defense of Grant aided to keep him in his position and enabled him to achieve the successes that have placed him first in the World's history as a military man, and secured for him the gratitude of his countrymen. . . ."

Sherman was strongly opposed to having Grant go to the East; he urged him to avoid Washington as a cesspool of iniquity and to make his headquarters in the West. Rawlins, who possessed a clearer vision, perceived the importance of Grant's presence in the East; together with other members of his old staff, he urged him to establish his headquarters with the Army of the Potomac and to direct operations as soon as the Spring campaign opened.

In view of the new duties and responsibilities which now devolved upon Grant as a commanding general, Rawlins felt that Grant might wish to replace him and offered to withdraw and "leave the place to an educated and finished soldier." He was certain, however, that his past services to Grant gave him something of a claim to the new post of

chief of staff which had been created when Grant was made lieutenant-general. Grant assured him of his unchanged confidence and retained him at the head of his staff. It is clear, however, that in the Virginia campaigns Rawlins did not exert the same influence which he had carried in the West. During the campaign from Rapidan to Appomattox, Rawlins repeatedly informed Wilson that he felt his influence with Grant was waning and that "neither the policy nor the plans developed themselves with the same absence of friction, or reached the same level of excellence that characterized them in the West."

We think of Grant as a prosaic and unimaginative man possessed of little emotion. Rawlins, however, paints another picture of his commander. At the opening of the Wilderness campaign, a stream of officers appeared at headquarters with news of a break in the Union lines. Clearly and calmly Grant gave such orders as he deemed necessary, then entered his tent "and throwing himself face downward on his cot, gave way to the greatest emotion, but without uttering any word of doubt or discouragement. What was in his heart can only be inferred, but nothing can be more certain than that he was stirred to the very depths of his soul." Wilson and Bowers, also on Grant's staff, declared they had never seen Grant so deeply moved.

After the bloody repulse of Grant's army at Cold Harbor in June of 1864, Rawlins was enraged at the army's continued policy of making frontal attacks upon Lee. He held Grant primarily responsible for this, but when he talked about the matter with Dana and Wilson at the latter's headquarters, he "grew white with rage as he denounced the influence of Colonel Cyrus B. Comstock, Grant's chief engineer at Vicksburg, and now attached to the Lieutenant-General's staff." With blanched lips, glittering teeth, and flashing eyes, Rawlins declared that Comstock had won Grant's confidence and was now leading the army to ruin by his advocacy and reiteration of "Smash 'em up! Smash 'em up!"

Both Rawlins and Dana urged Wilson, then in com-

mand of a cavalry division, to return to the staff, where he could exercise a salutary and restraining influence to offset Comstock's ascendancy. It is not known whether Rawlins discussed the matter with Grant himself, but it is a fact that henceforth the "smash 'em up" tactics were abandoned and Grant returned to the more scientific plans which he had followed with such success at Vicksburg and Chattanooga.

Rawlins was a vigorous opponent of Sherman's plan to abandon Atlanta and march across Georgia, leaving Hood free to move into Tennessee and perhaps reach the Ohio River. He felt strongly that Sherman should pursue Hood and force him to battle. The apprehensions of Rawlins were due in part to information and advice he received from Wilson, one of the most intelligent and scientific of Grant's generals. Rawlins finally obtained permission to go to Missouri to gather recruits for the army of Thomas at Nashville. On his way west he stopped at Washington; in the intensity of his zeal he so far forgot himself as to visit the War Department to protest against Grant's decision to permit Sherman to march through Georgia. This was Rawlins's only improper and, in a sense disloyal, act during his entire association with Grant.

In a letter dated December 22nd, 1886 and written to Robert Underwood Johnson, the editor of *The Century Magazine*, Sherman thus appraises Rawlins:

"I had been acquainted with General John A. Rawlings,<sup>1</sup> General Grant's 'Chief of Staff,' from the beginning of the War. He was always most loyal and devoted to his Chief, an enthusiastic patriot and of real ability. He was a neighbor of General Grant in Galena at the breaking out of the War, a lawyer in good practice, an intense thinker, and a man of vehement expression: a soldier by force of circumstances rather than by education or practice, yet of infinite use to his Chief throughout the War . . .

---

<sup>1</sup>After twenty-two years Sherman had evidently forgotten how to spell Rawlins's name.

“General Rawlins was enthusiastically devoted to his friends in the Western Army, with which he had been associated from Cairo to Vicksburg and Chattanooga, and doubtless like many others at the time, October, 1864, feared that I was about to lead his comrades in a ‘wild goose chase,’ not fully comprehending the objects aimed at or that I on the spot had better means of accurate knowledge than he in the distance. He did not possess the magnificent equipoise of General Grant, nor the confidence in my military sagacity which his chief did, and I am not all surprised to learn that he went to Washington from City Point to obtain an order from the President or Secretary of War to compel me with an army of 65,000 of the best soldiers which America had ever produced to remain idle, when an opportunity was offered such as never occurs twice to any man on earth. General Rawlins was right according to the lights he possessed . . . He was one of the many referred to by Lincoln, who sat in darkness, but after the event saw a great light.”

For two months at the end of the Summer of 1864 Rawlins had leave of absence and went north for the sake of his health. Some of his friends on the staff, no doubt with Grant’s concurrence, urged Rawlins to give up active service in the field and establish headquarters at Washington. When Dana saw him in Washington he wrote Wilson, “I fear there is no escape for him.” When he returned to army headquarters he was still a sick man. When Rawlins was out of earshot, Grant remarked to some of the other members of the staff, “I do not like that cough.” It was indeed the note of doom for his faithful and courageous chief of staff.

Towards the middle of the Summer of 1864, after the repulse at Cold Harbor and the failure of the attack on Petersburg, Grant once more relapsed into intemperance, to the great distress of Rawlins. Writing to his wife on July 28th, 1864, Rawlins said:

“I find the General in my absence digressed from his true path. The God of Heaven only knows how long I

am to serve my country as the guardian of the habits of him whom it has honored. It shall not be always thus. Owing to this faltering of his, I shall not be able to leave here till the rebel movement in Maryland is settled and also the fate of Atlanta . . . [Later.] Matters are now such that it is impossible for me to leave here at present. Active operations have commenced, which with the fact of the General's forgetting himself, in that one danger of which I wrote you this morning, renders my being here of an importance that you can appreciate as fully as any person living although it deprives you of an immediate visit from me, a visit which my health demands . . ."

The next day Rawlins wrote again to his wife:

"The General was at the front today, and I learn from one of his staff he deviated from the only path he should ever travel by taking a glass of liquor. It is the first time I have failed to accompany him to Petersburg, and it was with misgivings I did so. Nothing but indisposition induced me to remain behind. I shall hereafter, under no circumstances, fail to accompany him . . ."

This lapse of Grant took place several weeks after General William F. Smith said Grant had drunk to excess in his presence and in that of General Butler.

Rawlins witnessed the surrender at Appomattox. On the 8th of April Grant was confined to a farmhouse at Curdsville with illness. Members of his staff had persuaded him to bathe his feet in hot water and mustard and apply mustard plasters to his wrists and the back of his neck, but these measures gave him no relief. At midnight there arrived Lee's note answering Grant's proposal for the surrender of the Confederate Army. Rawlins took the note, went to the room in which Grant was resting, opened the door softly, and listened for a moment. Grant heard him and called out: "Come in. I am awake. I am suffering too much to get any sleep." A candle was brought and Grant read Lee's note, which stated that he would be pleased to confer with Grant so far as the proposal affected the Confederate forces under his command and dealt with the restoration of peace.

Grant's reaction was brief: "It looks as if Lee still means to fight. I will reply in the morning." Rawlins's feeling was more forthright: "Now he wants to arrange for peace. Something to embrace the whole Confederacy if possible. This is a positive insult—an attempt in an under-hand way to change the whole terms of the correspondence."

Grant communicated with Lee to inform him that he had no authority to treat on the subject of peace and that the meeting proposed for that morning could have no beneficial result. Lee then responded with his second note, asking Grant for a meeting to arrange for the surrender of his army. With flashing eyes Rawlins read Lee's note; when he had finished Grant inquired, "Well, how do you think that will do?" Rawlins replied, "I think *that* will do!" Grant then directed Rawlins to read this memorable message aloud to the officers present. When he had finished reading, Rawlins leaped on a log, waved his hat, and called for three cheers.

After the war Rawlins, now a major-general in the Regular Army, accompanied General Dodge, chief engineer of the Union Pacific Railroad, as far as Salt Lake City on a trip over the road's proposed route. He undertook this trip in the hope that the western air might restore his health. Today's sprawling western town of Rawlins, Wyoming is a memorial of that visit.

When Grant was elected President, Rawlins aspired to the position of Secretary of War; for some reason, however, Grant did not wish him to fill this post. Having achieved the highest success and world-wide fame, Grant perhaps felt that he could dispense with the hitherto "indispensable man" and do without the services of the faithful but austere censor of his conduct. Grant kept Rawlins in the dark to the very last. He asked Wilson to inquire from Rawlins whether he would accept an appointment as commander of the Department of Arizona on the ground that the outdoor life and dry atmosphere might restore his health. But Rawlins made it clear to Wilson that he preferred a brief life with the high honor of Secretary of War

to a longer life on the desolate deserts of the Southwest. When Wilson so reported, Grant authorized him to tell Rawlins that he would be Secretary of War.

Six days after Grant's inauguration, Rawlins was appointed to this post, but his term in the War Department lasted only a few months, for he succumbed to tuberculosis at Washington on September 6th, 1869. On his deathbed he summoned his old friend and comrade, General Wilson, a distance of a thousand miles and appealed to him to become his literary executor and do justice to his memory when he was gone. Wilson kept his promise in his admirable biography of Rawlins. Grant was at Saratoga, New York when he received the dispatch announcing the imminence of his old friend's death. This was on Saturday night, September 5th when there was no train available; Grant left with the first train in the morning and arrived in Washington forty minutes after Rawlins had expired.

Although not a professional soldier, Rawlins approached closely to a satisfactory explanation of Grant's success as a leader of armies; in a letter to his wife, he said: "It is decisiveness and energy in action that always accomplishes grand results and strikes terror to the hearts of the foe. It is this, and not the conception of great schemes, that makes military genius."



# 5

## Grant and Logan

One of the highest tributes Grant ever paid any of his captains was when, anxious over the state of affairs in Tennessee in December of 1864, he ordered General John A. Logan to proceed to Nashville to relieve General Thomas of his command if, on arrival, he found that Thomas had not yet attacked Hood's army. Grant chose Logan from among all the officers who were available at that time as the man for the crisis.

The Civil War was fundamentally a great people's struggle in which the majority of commissioned officers were civilians only temporarily turned soldiers; it is therefore remarkable that so few civilian non-professional officers achieved distinction. In the Confederate Army the most conspicuous civilian officer was the great cavalry leader Nathaniel Bedford Forrest. In the Union Army the most prominent non-professional officers were Frank Blair of Missouri, brother of Montgomery Blair, the Postmaster-General; Ben Butler of New Orleans fame and the Fort Fisher fiasco; James A. Garfield, Rosecrans's chief of staff in the campaign which ended in disaster at Chickamauga; Daniel Sickles, who lost a leg at Gettysburg; John McClermand of Illinois, who made a splendid record as a fighter at Belmont, Donelson, and Shiloh; and John A. Logan. Of these civilian generals, Logan was by far the ablest, an inspiring leader of men in battle. Rutherford B. Hayes

described him as "clearly the most eminent and distinguished of the volunteer soldiers." Grant ranked Logan and General M. M. Crocker, who likewise commanded a division in McPherson's corps in the Vicksburg campaign, as the two ablest civilian officers of the war. In his review of the siege of Vicksburg, Grant commented on some of the officers who served under him and wrote, "Logan and Crocker ended the campaign fitted to command independent armies." Few have heard of Crocker; but Logan, both during the war and for twenty years thereafter, was one of the best known men in the country.

James G. Blaine, who had Logan as a running-mate in the presidential campaign of 1884, thus appraised Logan as statesman and soldier: "While there have been more illustrious military leaders in the United States, and more illustrious leaders in legislative halls, there has, I think, been no man in this country who has combined the two careers in so eminent a degree as General Logan."

John Alexander Logan was born on a farm in Jackson County, Illinois on February 9th, 1826. After serving as a lieutenant in the Mexican War, he studied law with his uncle, Alexander M. Jenkins, served in the Illinois Legislature, and was elected to Congress as a Democrat in 1858. At the Charleston Convention of 1860 he supported Stephen A. Douglas for the presidential nomination. He enlisted immediately upon the outbreak of war and served with a Michigan regiment in the battle of Bull Run. Then he returned to Illinois, and in "Egypt," as the Southern part of Illinois was called, raised the Thirty-first Illinois Regiment, of which he was made colonel.

not from  
Egypt  
Logan first met Grant at Springfield, Illinois, just after the latter had taken command of the Twenty-first Illinois Regiment. The men of this unit had enlisted for three months' service and were hesitating to renew their term. As the regiment came from "Egypt," where Logan resided, he was invited to visit their camp and address them with a view to inducing them to re-enlist; John A. McClernand accompanied him on this mission. On the way out to the

camp Logan inquired of Grant: "Colonel, the regiment is a little unruly. Do you think you can manage them?" "I think I can," was Grant's quiet answer.

Grant had some doubts about permitting Logan to speak; however, since he was with McClernand, whose patriotic sentiments were known to all, he gave his consent. Logan made a speech to the troops which so stirred the men with its loyalty and devotion to the Union that Grant says "they would have volunteered to remain in the army as long as an enemy of the country continued to bear arms against it." When Logan had finished his speech he brought Grant to the front of the platform with the statement, "Allow me to present to you your new colonel, U. S. Grant." The soldiers cheered loudly and called, as usual, for a speech. Grant's speech was of characteristic brevity: "Men, go to your quarters." The rowdy, unruly regiment had found its master.

At Belmont, Grant's first battle, Logan had a horse shot from under him. In the midst of the battle the colonel of another Illinois regiment rode up to Logan, who was astride his big black horse, and said, somewhat pompously, "Colonel Logan, remember, if you please, that I have the position of honor." Logan instantly answered, "I don't care a damn where I am, so long as I get into this fight."

At the siege of Fort Donelson Logan so attracted the attention of Grant that he recommended him to the War Department for promotion to the rank of brigadier-general. In the battles around Vicksburg Logan played a gallant part as commander of a division in McPherson's corps of the Army of the Tennessee. Charles A. Dana thus describes him at Vicksburg:

"I now come to the Seventh Corps and to its most prominent division general, Logan. This is a man of remarkable qualities and peculiar character. Heroic and brilliant, he is sometimes unsteady. Inspiring his men with his own enthusiasm on the field of battle, he is splendid in all its crash and commotion, but before it begins he is doubtful of the result, and after it is over he is fearful we may yet be beaten. A man of instinct

and not of reflection, his judgments are often absurd, but his extemporaneous opinions are very apt to be right. Deficient in education, he is full of generous attachments and sincere animosities. On the whole, few can serve the cause of the country more effectively than he, and none serve it more faithfully."

It was Logan's curious idiosyncrasy that he would fight a battle with tremendous energy and courage and then, after winning the struggle, entertain the "immovable conviction" that he had lost the contest. After the important victory over Pemberton at Champion Hill, in which he had played a great part, Dana and Rawlins rode over to Logan's command. Greatly agitated, he cried out to them that the day was lost, and that he would soon be swept from the field. Dana answered, "Why, General, we have gained the day." But Logan could not be persuaded. "Don't you hear the cannon over there?" he said. "They will be down on us right away. In an hour I will have twenty thousand men to fight." "But this," says Dana, "was merely an intellectual peculiarity. It did not in the least impair his value as a soldier or a commanding officer. He never made any mistake on account of it."

After the surrender of Vicksburg, McPherson asked Grant to permit the Forty-fifth Illinois Regiment, one of the regiments in Logan's division, to be the first to take possession of the courthouse. This noble building with its Corinthian column and lofty cupola dominated the city. One of Logan's men climbed the ladder leading to the cupola. Soon the Confederate flag that had so long flaunted its defiance to the Union Army came fluttering down like a wounded bird, and in its place the stars and stripes waved in triumph. As soon as the flag was observed by the men on the decks of the warships lying in the river, it was greeted by salvos of artillery and the long drawn-out roar of the steamboat sirens. At that same hour on that eventful 4th of July in 1863, the mountain passes leading from Gettysburg to Hagerstown and the Potomac were blocked with the soldiers and trains of Lee's army retreating after the bloody repulse at Gettys-

burg. The Father of Waters now "flowed unvexed to the sea." Looking back on his great campaign Grant wrote: "The fate of the Confederacy was sealed when Vicksburg fell."

Promoted to be a major-general of volunteers after Vicksburg, Logan commanded the Fifteenth Corps of the Army of the Tennessee, McPherson's army, in Sherman's campaign against Atlanta. When Sherman learned of the death of McPherson in the midst of battle on July 22nd, 1864, he sent orders to Logan to take command. Mounted on his familiar black stallion, hatless and covered with the grime of battle, Logan was everywhere on the field, rallying the troops and throwing back the Confederate attack. As he spurred his horse among the men he cried out: "Don't disgrace the Fifteenth Corps! Will you hold this line with me?" Chanting his name as he was known in the army, "Black Jack! Black Jack!" and shouting, "McPherson and revenge!" the troops of the Army of the Tennessee drove Hood back into Atlanta. That night after the battle, when Logan came to Sherman's headquarters at the Howard House, Sherman warmly congratulated him for his accomplishments on that critical day.

Five days after the battle General O. O. Howard was appointed by Sherman as McPherson's successor in command of the Army of the Tennessee, and Logan was ordered back to the command of his corps. Up to that time Howard had been in command of the Fourth Corps of the Army of the Cumberland under General Thomas. Nine days after the battle Logan wrote to his wife:

"On the 22nd we had a terrific battle on the left of the line. The Army of the Tennessee fought the battle alone against nearly all the Confederate Army. General McPherson was killed early in the fight and I assumed command and fought the battle. When I took command things were looking very blue. I saved the day after I took command. We drove the rebels back into their works in Atlanta. On the 27th I got notice that General Howard was assigned to the command of this army by

the War Department, and I was ordered back to the command of my corps. I suppose this was all right, as Howard is from the Army of the Potomac . . .”

This last sentence might be taken to mean that Logan did not object to being superseded by one who had recently come from the Army of the Potomac with the Eleventh Corps, as he might have done had Sherman selected some officer who had served long with one of the western armies. It might, however, also be taken to mean that Logan felt that the generals of the Regular Army and the graduates of West Point had preferment when it came to promotion.

Sherman consulted General Thomas about a successor to McPherson; together they examined the merits and qualities of every officer in the army and finally selected Howard. Thomas objected strongly to Logan, even threatening to ask to be relieved should Logan be appointed. He said: “I don’t think it is going to do to keep Logan there. He is brave enough, and a good officer; but if he had an army I am afraid he would edge over on both sides and annoy Schofield and me. Even as a corps commander you cannot do better than to put Howard in command of that army.” Another reason given by Sherman for rejecting Logan was the rivalry which existed between him and General Frank Blair, who commanded the Seventeenth Corps in the Army of the Tennessee: “Between him and General Blair there existed a natural rivalry. Both were men of great courage and talent, but were politicians by nature and experience, and it may be that for this reason they were mistrusted by regular officers like Generals Schofield, Thomas, and myself.” Sherman says, too, that he did not consider Logan equal to the command of three corps. But the thing which gave particular offense to Logan and his friends was Sherman’s description of Logan and Blair as political generals: “I regarded both General Logan and Blair as volunteers that looked to personal fame and glory as auxiliary and secondary to their political ambition, and not as professional soldiers.” These words, of course, wounded Logan deeply, and for a time a breach existed between the two men.

Writing to Logan on February 11th, 1883 in explanation of what he had said in his *Memoirs* about Logan and his political ambitions, Sherman recalled that he had been absent from the army after the capture of Atlanta and did not rejoin it until the army reached Savannah. Sherman said it troubled him to have a corps commander serving two distinct causes, one military and the other political, and that this influenced him in selecting Howard instead of Logan to succeed McPherson. "This is all I record in my *Memoirs*; it was so, and I cannot amend them. Never in speech, writing, or record, surely not in the *Memoirs*, do I recall in applying to you and Blair, for I always speak of you together, the 'term of political generals.'" "

To this letter Logan replied, saying that when he left the army and went North to take the stump in Illinois and to help in Ohio, he did it with the full knowledge of General Grant and "at the special and private request" of Lincoln.

At a banquet tendered Sherman on his retirement as General of the Army in 1888, Logan responded to the toast of the Volunteer Soldier and paid a touching tribute to Sherman:

"Wherever he may go, wherever he may be, whatever may be his condition in life, there is not one who would not stretch out a helping hand to that brave commander who led them to glory. Speaking for that army, if I may be permitted to speak for it, I have to say: May the choicest blessings that God showers upon the head of man go with him along down through his life, is the prayer of every soldier who served under Sherman."

When Logan had finished his speech, Sherman arose from his seat, walked over to Logan, put his arm around his neck and warmly shook his hand, while tears coursed down his cheeks. This ended their alienation.

Sherman had caused Logan tears of a different nature when he passed him over and made Howard commander of the Army of the Tennessee. General Grenville M. Dodge, commanding the Sixteenth Army Corps, was at Sherman's headquarters the day the announcement of Howard's pro-

motion was made. He had passed Logan sitting on the porch as he went into Sherman's quarters. When he came out—the door was open and Logan had heard Sherman's statement that Howard was to replace McPherson—Dodge saw tears in Logan's eyes.

Grant commented on Sherman's appointment of Howard and upon Logan's succession in the midst of a fierce battle to the command of the entire Army upon McPherson's death:

“He conceived that he had done his full duty as commander in that engagement; and I can bear testimony, from personal observation, that he had proved himself fully equal to all the lower positions which he had occupied as a soldier. I will not pretend to question the motive which actuated Sherman in taking an officer from another army to supersede General Logan. I have no doubt, whatever, that he did this for what he considered would be to the good of the service, which was more important than that the personal feelings of any individual should not be aggrieved; though I doubt whether he had an officer with him who could have filled the place as Logan would have done.”

General Hooker, who commanded the Twentieth Corps of the Army of the Cumberland under Thomas, took offense at the appointment of Howard, whom he ranked and whom he partly blamed for the disaster which had overtaken the Army of the Potomac at the battle of Chancellorsville in May of 1863 when he himself was in command. Sherman says that, when Thomas forwarded Hooker's application to be relieved, he “approved and heartily recommended it,” that Hooker's chances to succeed McPherson were not even considered, and that he had been on more than one occasion disposed to relieve him of his command because of his repeated attempts to interfere with McPherson and Schofield.

Logan probably never knew of the strong objection General Thomas had made to him as a possible commander of the Army of the Tennessee after McPherson's death. If he did know, he exhibited noble magnanimity and forgiveness when, as we shall now see, he had in his pocket an order which



would have relieved Thomas of his command at Nashville before he won his great victory in December of 1864, and would have made him Thomas's successor.

Grant suffered great anxiety over the situation at Nashville in the first days of December, 1864 when Hood's army lay around Nashville, and it seemed impossible to persuade Thomas to mount an attack; in this crisis, Grant ordered General Logan, who happened to be on a visit to army headquarters at City Point, to proceed to Nashville and relieve Thomas of his command. He added the proviso that Logan was not to deliver the order, but communicate with Grant by telegraph if Thomas should attack Hood in the meantime. On reaching Cincinnati, Logan sent one of his staff to Thomas with the copy of Grant's orders, but magnanimously urged Thomas to make the attack that Grant had ordered so that a change of commanders would not be necessary. From Cincinnati Logan proceeded to Louisville where he heard the tidings of Thomas's great victory. Thus Logan unknowingly heaped coals of fire upon Thomas's head.

Charles Sumner, the distinguished Senator from Massachusetts, became one of Grant's severest critics in the Presidency and called for the downfall of "this odious, insulting, degrading, aide-de-campish, incapable dictatorship." In May of 1872, Sumner launched another bitter attack upon Grant with the object of defeating his renomination at the Republican Convention which was to convene at Philadelphia. On June 3rd Logan rose to make reply. Sumner had declared that, having attended the birth of the Republican Party, he did not desire to follow its hearse. Logan answered as follows:

"Let me say to him or to his friends, he not being present, that if today he is following the hearse of the Republican Party, he is following that hearse because he himself with his own hand drew the dagger which struck it in its vital parts. If the power is in him, he has become its slayer. But, sir, the power is not in him to perform this work, to wit, the assassination of the party which, he says, he organized. No, sir; strong men and

honest ones by the many thousands stand by it, and will ward off the blows aimed at it by the powerful Senator and his allies; and, sir, it will pass through this ordeal unscathed, and shine forth brighter and more powerful than ever.

“Mr. President, we did go forth and fight the oligarchy of slavery. The Senator fought it here in the Senate-chamber. Time and again have I been filled with pride, and been made to respect and honor and love the Senator from Massachusetts, as I saw him engaged in the severe and fierce battles which he fought against the oligarchy of slavery. I have seen him when he fought it face to face, so far as language and oratory were concerned. But, sir, let me reply to him, slavery was not destroyed by his speeches; slavery was not destroyed by his oratory; slavery was not destroyed by his eloquence; slavery was not destroyed by his power; slavery was not destroyed by his efforts; but by war,—by the sword in the hands of Grant, and the bayonets that were held by his followers, the chains of slavery fell and the manacles dropped from the limbs of the slaves . . .

“And I tell the Senator from Massachusetts, that if the voices of patriots were loud enough to reach the tombs of the dead and sainted heroes who now lie fattening Southern soil, *their* voices would be heard repudiating, in solemn sounds, the slanders which have been poured out against their chieftain, the patriot-warrior of this country.”

Logan was one of the Republican triumvirate, comprising also Roscoe Conkling of New York and Don Cameron of Pennsylvania, which almost succeeded in obtaining for Grant a third term in 1880, when James A. Garfield, who had not even been placed in nomination as candidate, received 399 votes at the Chicago Convention and became the nominee of the party. Throughout the thirty-six ballots Grant's faithful 306 stood by him to the end.

In 1884 Logan was Blaine's running-mate in the exciting Presidential campaign of that year. His farewell meeting with Grant occurred when he visited him in his last illness in 1885 just before the mortally sick general was taken to

Mount McGregor. Swarthy "Black Jack" left Grant, full of sorrow to see the hand of death upon the beloved chieftain under whose banner he had fought at Belmont, Donelson, Shiloh, Vicksburg, and Chattanooga. Logan followed Grant into the unseen the next year. He built his own monument in Memorial Day, conceived by him and first celebrated in May of 1868.

# 6

## Grant and Sheridan

On a September day of 1862, General Grant walked into the railroad station at Corinth, Mississippi and saw there an officer with a big head and a little body. The odd, almost grotesque man, resembling one made up for comedy, was Philip H. Sheridan, whom Lincoln once described as "one of those long armed fellows with short legs that can scratch their shins without having to stoop over to do it."

Sheridan was just about to start with his regiment, the Second Michigan Cavalry, to reinforce the army under General Buell near Louisville. Grant had ordered that a regiment be sent to Buell's army, but was not pleased with the selection made. He did not wish this regiment and its colonel to leave the army, but Sheridan foresaw that Kentucky was now to be a chief field of action and was anxious to have a part in events. When Grant said that he desired him to remain, Sheridan replied that he wished to depart; his emphatic answer was so "brusque and rough" that Grant was hurt and annoyed: "I don't think Sheridan could have said anything to have made a worse impression upon me."

Such was Grant's first impression of the great trooper upon whom in later years he was to heap praise more extravagant than he ever bestowed upon any of his generals, including the beloved Sherman and McPherson. Young reports that Grant once made this glowing statement about Sheridan:

“As a soldier, as a commander of troops, as a man capable of doing all that is possible with any number of men, there is no man living greater than Sheridan. He belongs to the first rank of soldiers, not only of our country but of the world. I rank Sheridan with Napoleon and Frederick and the great commanders of history.”<sup>1</sup>

The place of Sheridan's birth is a matter of dispute. Ireland, the Atlantic Ocean, Massachusetts, Montreal, Ohio, and New York have all been named. It is reasonable to suppose, however, that unless a man has been left an orphan at infancy, he should be the best authority as to his birthplace. We therefore accept Sheridan's own statement when he says: “On the 6th of March, 1831, I was born in Albany, New York, the third child in a family which eventually increased to six—four boys and two girls.” It has been said that, while Sheridan knew that Montreal was his native city, he gave Albany as his birthplace when his name was being mentioned for the Presidency, in order that he might qualify. This theory hardly comports with so forthright and courageous a character.

His parents had come to New York as emigrants from County Cavan, Ireland a year before his birth. In 1832 the family removed to Somerset in Perry County, Ohio, where the father obtained employment as a contractor on the Cumberland, or National, Road, then being extended west of the Ohio. After receiving the usual country-school training, Sheridan was employed in several rural stores; his last job was with the firm of Fink & Dittoe, whom he served as bookkeeper. In his leisure hours he improved his time by reading, especially in the field of history; in the hot disputes over the Mexican War which sometimes raged around the stove, he was frequently consulted as an authority.

The Mexican War stirred his military ambition, for, unlike his future commander, Sheridan aspired to military fame. This was in marked contrast to the attitude of Grant, who entertained so slight a desire to be a soldier during his first year at West Point that he anxiously read the news-

---

<sup>1</sup> Young, *Around the World with General Grant*, Vol. II, P. 297.

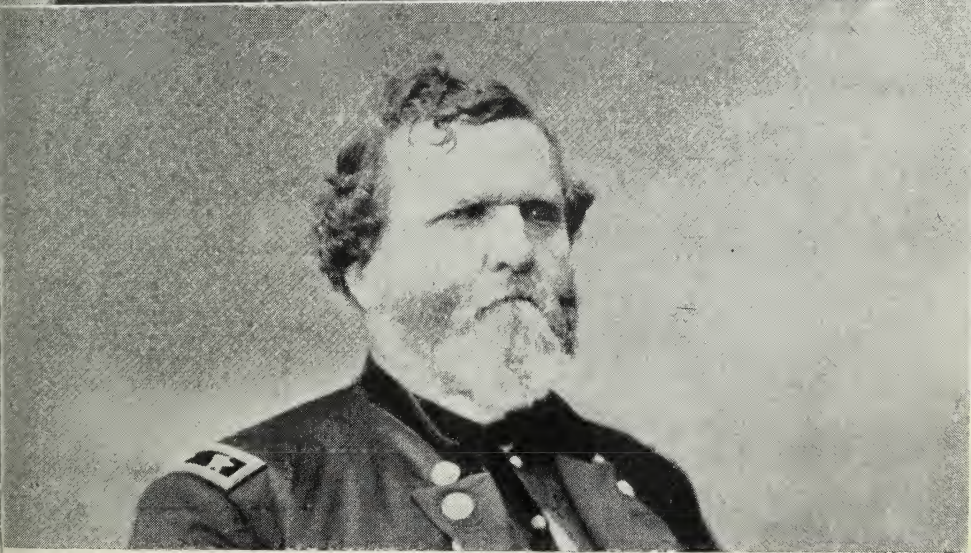
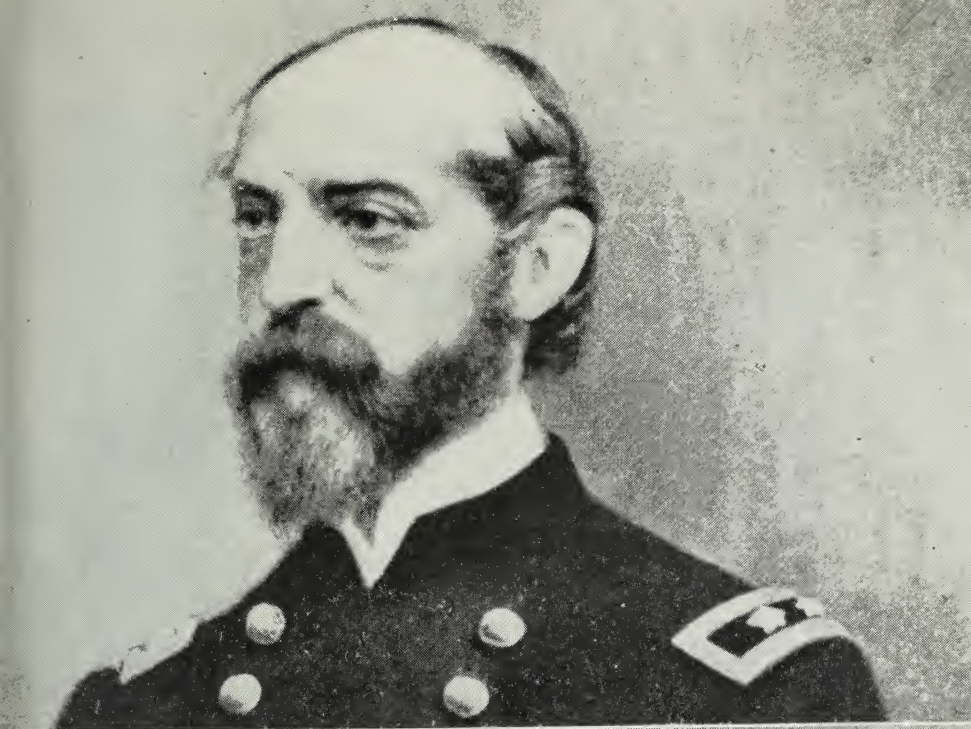
papers to learn if a bill then pending in Congress for the dissolution of the academy had passed.

Through a Congressman whose acquaintance he made at the store, Sheridan received an appointment to West Point and entered the academy in 1848. Among his classmates was the afterwards distinguished general, Henry W. Slocum. Sheridan was ill-prepared for the course in mathematics; after taps he would hang blankets over the window so as to hide the light while Slocum helped him with the difficult problems in algebra.

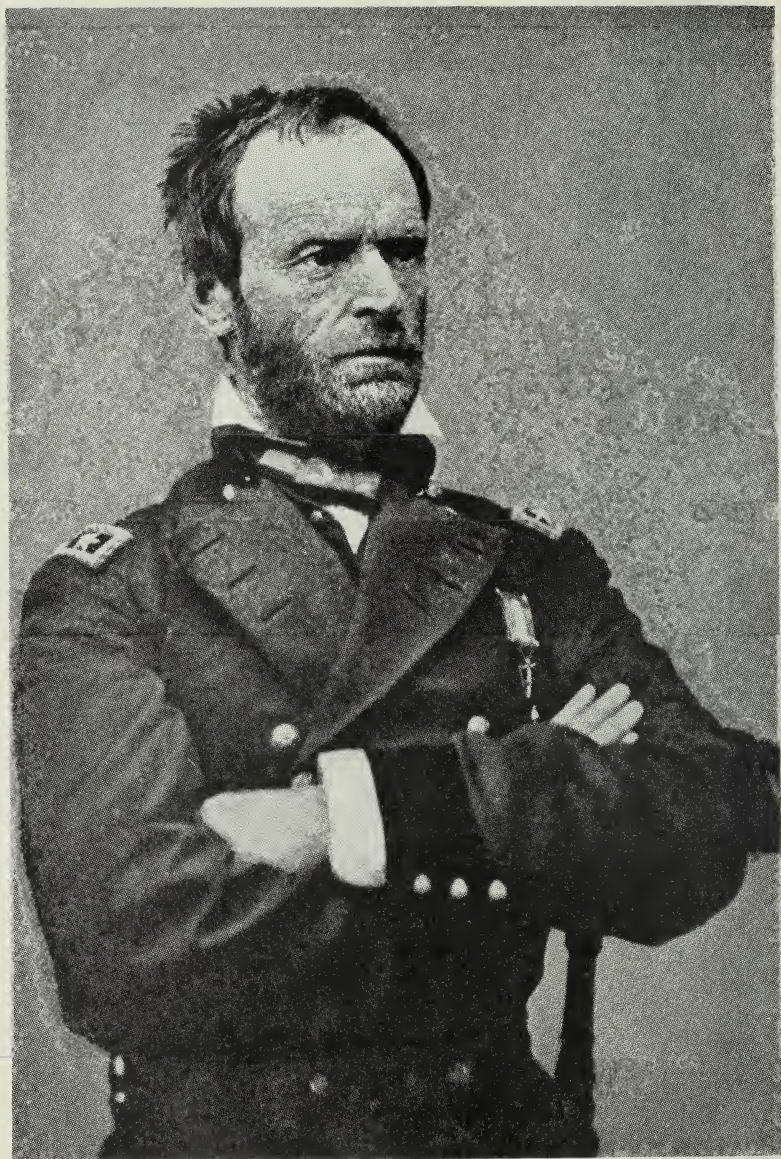
In his third year at West Point Sheridan's army career was almost terminated by an outbreak of his fiery Irish temper. The Cadet Sergeant, William R. Terrill of Virginia, ordered Sheridan to "dress" in a certain direction. Sheridan thought he was properly "dressed" and that the order had been given in an improper tone; in a rage he rushed at Terrill with lowered bayonet but fortunately recovered control of himself before he inflicted injury on the Cadet Sergeant. Terrill, of course, reported him for this gross insubordination; the next time they met, Sheridan attacked Terrill with his fists in front of the barracks until an officer appeared on the scene and stopped the fight. The Commandant suspended Sheridan for one year. This comparatively mild sentence for an offense which merited expulsion was meted out to him in consideration of his previous good conduct.

Sheridan returned to his home at Somerset and to employment in the store of Fink & Dittoe. In the Summer of 1852 he returned to the academy and graduated with the class of 1853. At the head of this class were the brilliant McPherson, afterwards commander of the Army of the Tennessee; John M. Schofield, commander of the Army of the Ohio; and the impetuous John B. Hood, who distinguished himself at Chickamauga and Gettysburg and succeeded Joseph E. Johnston in command of the army confronting Sherman in Georgia.

Sheridan's first service was with the First Infantry in Texas, where one of his fellow-officers was Jerome Napoleon



*Upper:* George G. Meade the victor at Gettysburg, the greatest battle of the Civil War. He fell into disfavor when he allowed Lee's forces to escape across the Potomac after this engagement, much to Lincoln's dismay. *Lower:* George H. Thomas known as "The Rock of Chickamauga"; he refused to move, even when ordered by his superiors, until he was ready to fight. Even his friends admitted that he was "too slow to move and too brave to run away."



William T. Sherman, the hero of Shiloh and the captor of Atlanta. Like Grant, a failure before the war, he used the influence of his brother, John, the Ohio senator, to restore him to the army. Although he called himself "smarter than Grant", he never had the courage to throw his entire army into one decisive engagement.



Bonaparte, grandson of Jerome Napoleon, Napoleon's youngest brother, and the Baltimore beauty Betsy Patterson. Riding out from the fort one day, Sheridan and several companions were attacked by a group of Apaches. With great presence of mind he leaped on the bare back of the mustang from which the Indian chief had dismounted and galloped to the fort; without dismounting, he secured his pistols and, taking soldiers with him, rode back to the place where he had left his companions and shot the Apache chief dead. As Brockett relates the story, the officer in charge, who afterwards became a Confederate general, rewarded this act of heroism and gallantry by censuring Sheridan for breach of discipline in being absent from his command without orders. In Texas, when he was not pursuing the savages, Sheridan took up the study of ornithology, attracted to this avocation by the great variety of brightly colored birds which made their winter homes along the Rio Grande. In view of his subsequent activity, it is somewhat difficult to visualize the fiery Sheridan engaged in Audubon's peaceful and pleasing pursuit.

Sheridan transferred from Texas to California and Oregon, where he joined Grant's old regiment, the Fourth Infantry. In the Oregon territory Sheridan had six years of the usual frontier post experience, fighting the Indians, enjoying the wild life of the Northwest, and forming friendships with those who would be his comrades in the Civil War. Sheridan, now a captain, reached New York in November of 1861; longing to play a role in the war, he joined his regiment, the Thirteenth Infantry, Sherman's old regiment, at Jefferson Barracks, near St. Louis.

In his first post Sheridan audited the confused accounts of General John C. Frémont's command. Thereafter, he served with General Curtis as chief quartermaster in the Pea Ridge campaign, but failed to see action in the battle itself. The Spring of 1862 found him discouraged and disheartened: thus far, his military career had consisted of summing up accounts and purchasing beef cattle and other supplies for the army. However, his day was soon to dawn.

When Halleck joined Grant's army after the battle of Shiloh, he appointed Sheridan to his staff as quartermaster. There Sheridan came to know Sherman well; as a boy he had often seen Sherman's wife and knew the Ewing family. Sherman endeavored unsuccessfully to obtain for him the command of an Ohio regiment. At about this time there occurred a vacancy in the colonelcy of the Second Michigan Cavalry; when Governor Blair of Michigan telegraphed Halleck to request him to name a professional soldier for the post, Halleck recommended Sheridan. He was soon given a cavalry brigade in the Army of the Mississippi and distinguished himself in the battle of Booneville. For his gallantry on that field he was recommended by Halleck for a brigadier-generalship. His appointment dated from July 1st, 1862, the day of the battle of Booneville.

Sheridan commanded a division under Buell at the battle of Perryville, Kentucky on October 8th, 1862.<sup>1</sup> In the fierce battle of Stone River, or Murfreesboro, between the armies of Rosecrans and Bragg on December 31st, 1862 and January 2nd, 1863, Sheridan played a conspicuous part and won his reputation as a "perfect tornado in battle." Gillmore recalls that in the midst of that battle Rosecrans rode up to him when half of his men were on the ground, either dead or disabled. "He was pouring," said Rosecrans, "such a volume of oaths into the remainder as made my blood curdle. 'Hold on, Sheridan,' I said to him, 'omit the profanity. Remember the first bullet may send you into eternity.' 'I can't help it, General,' he answered, 'we must hold this point

---

<sup>1</sup> On the eve of the battle, Sheridan and William R. Terrill, with whom he had fought at West Point, were reconciled. Terrill was killed in the battle which followed. James B. Terrill, a general in the Confederate Army, was killed at Bethesda Church, Virginia, in 1864. *The Military History of the Virginia Military Institute from 1839 to 1865*, by J. C. Wise, relates that the father of the two generals buried the bodies of his sons in a common grave with this inscription on the stone: "God alone knows which was right." This epitaph has been often quoted. It is a moving story; but William R. Terrill was re-interred at West Point, February 20, 1884. Presumably, his body was brought from Perryville.

and my men won't think I'm in earnest unless I swear at them like hell.' ”

In the bloody battle of Chickamauga, Georgia on September 19th and 20th, 1863, Sheridan commanded a division in General A. D. McCook's corps, and was forced to retreat when the Union right and center were broken by the Confederate onslaught. He managed, however, to bring his command by nightfall to the support of Thomas, the only Union corps commander left on the field.

When Grant was made lieutenant-general and general-in-chief, he was one day discussing with Lincoln and Halleck his plans for the coming campaign in Virginia. He expressed dissatisfaction with the little that had been accomplished so far by the cavalry and said he wanted the very best man for that command. “How would Sheridan do?” asked Halleck. “The very man I want,” answered Grant, and an order was issued for Sheridan to report at once to Washington.

Sheridan reached Washington on April 4th and went to see Halleck, who took him to call on Stanton. Stanton eyed him closely during the interview and manifestly was not greatly impressed with the five-foot-five, one-hundred-and-fifteen-pound, thirty-three-year-old general. Thereafter they visited Lincoln, who greeted Sheridan cordially and voiced the hope that he would more than fulfill Grant's expectations. The President expressed his belief that the cavalry had not done its utmost and ended the interview with the stale jest, “Who ever saw a dead cavalryman?” When Grant next visited the War Department someone said to him, “The officer you brought on from the West is rather a little fellow to handle your cavalry.” Grant's response was crisp: “You will find him big enough for the purpose before we get through with him.”

On April 4th Sheridan took command of the cavalry of the Army of the Potomac. He immediately sought an interview with Meade, informed him that the effectiveness of the cavalry was hindered by too much guard and picket duty, and stated that he proposed to unify and consolidate it as

a fighting unit. Meade expressed anxiety about his flanks and lines of communication, but Sheridan replied that if he were allowed to use the cavalry as an attacking force, there would be no occasion for worry about his flanks or his rear.

In one of the early battles of the Wilderness Meade changed the orders Sheridan had given to the cavalry. In the attempt to carry out these orders, the cavalry and infantry became intermingled in the darkness and great confusion resulted. The next day the irascible Meade summoned Sheridan to headquarters and the two had a heated interview. Meade blamed the cavalry for blocking the roads for the infantry; Sheridan retorted that, if that were true, Meade himself was to blame, for he had ordered the cavalry there without his knowledge. The interview came to an end when Sheridan informed Meade he could whip Stuart, Lee's Confederate cavalry leader, if he were given a free hand. Sheridan added the statement that, since Meade bypassed him in giving orders to the cavalry, he could henceforth command it himself.

The fiery and scholarly Meade was not accustomed to such forthrightness from his subordinate officers. In acting thus, Sheridan doubtless relied on the support of Grant, to whom he looked for the last word. The angry and astonished Meade went forthwith to Grant's headquarters and repeated the conversation, mentioning among other things that Sheridan had said he could whip Stuart if he were afforded the opportunity. Grant rejoined quietly: "Did Sheridan say that? Well, he generally knows what he is talking about. Let him go out and do it." That very night Meade gave Sheridan orders to move against Stuart; the next morning Sheridan departed on his famous raid against Richmond.

Sheridan spoke to his four division commanders before they started on the raid: "We are going out to fight Stuart's cavalry in consequence of a suggestion from me; we will give him a fair, square fight; we are strong and I know we can beat him, and in view of my recent representations to General Meade, I shall expect nothing but success." In the great raid that followed Sheridan made good his boast, de-

feated and mortally wounded Stuart at Yellow Tavern, and entered the suburbs of Richmond. Sheridan had, indeed, inspired the cavalry.

On one of the roads near Richmond explosions of planted torpedoes killed several horses and wounded several men. Sheridan compelled twenty-five prisoners he had taken to crawl forward on their knees, feel for the connecting wires in the darkness, and sever them. The unhappy prisoners informed their captor that the explosives had been planted by the owner of a nearby house. At Sheridan's orders the cellar of the man's house was mined with torpedoes, arranged so as to explode if the enemy came that way. Like Sherman, Sheridan did not conceive of war as a delicate business.

Sheridan's opportunity to obtain an important independent command came after Jubal Early had frightened Washington by his raid in the Summer of 1864. As long as Early remained in the lower Shenandoah Valley, his army was a menace to Washington and Pennsylvania. Determined to put a stop to these threats and to devastate the Valley of Virginia, which was one of the chief granaries of the Confederacy, Grant put Sheridan in command of the Army of the Shenandoah and relayed to him the orders for the total destruction of the valley which he had previously given to General David Hunter. Sheridan received these orders at Monocacy, Maryland on August 5th, 1864. Grant had gone north to adjust matters after Early's raid on Washington.

Although possessed of a strong force, Sheridan seemed reluctant to attack Early; on September 15th Grant visited him at his headquarters at Charlestown with a campaign plan. However, finding that Sheridan was at last ready to move and that his strategy was good, Grant shelved his own plan and magnanimously departed for fear that a successful attack might lead the newspapers to attribute to him the success due to Sheridan.

John William DeForrest, author of *Miss Ravenel's Conversion*, was at this time a young officer in Sheridan's army. He relates that one day in a camp of the Sixth Corps a sergeant of a Vermont brigade called his attention to two

officers engaged in earnest conversation who were walking by. "The junior, who was also the shortest, had a distinctly Irish face of the puffy sort, with irregular profile and a swarthy gray complexion. He talked in a low silvery voice, his elbows pressed to his sides, but gesturing slightly with his fingers. The elder man, blond and sandy-bearded, his red-oak features perfectly inexpressive, his gray eyes fixed on the ground, listened without replying."

"That youngest one is our General Sheridan," said the sergeant. "Don't you know who the other is?" DeForrest replied, "*That's* Grant!"

The sergeant gazed at Grant briefly, and then said: "I hate to see that old cuss around. When that old cuss is around there's sure to be a big fight on hand."

Sheridan justified Grant's confidence by winning the great victory over Early at Winchester on September 19th. However, Early almost turned the tables on Sheridan by a surprise attack on his army at Cedar Creek on October 19th. Sheridan had gone to Washington for a conference with the War Department and had reached Winchester on his return journey on October 18th. The next morning he was awakened by the sound of heavy cannonading. Mounting his famous war horse, Rienzi, he rode rapidly to Cedar Creek, twenty miles distant, where his magnetic presence on the field of battle helped to turn a rout into victory and sent Early whirling down the valley.

Sheridan's ride from Winchester to Cedar Creek was celebrated in verse in Thomas Buchanan Reed's famous poem, "Sheridan's Ride." Reed wrote it at the old Continental Hotel in Philadelphia as a poem which could be used in the Presidential campaign of that fall. The ride and the poem made Rienzi the most famous horse in American history. The splendid animal had been presented to Sheridan by Captain A. P. Campbell of the Second Michigan Cavalry when this regiment, then commanded by Sheridan, was encamped near Rienzi, Mississippi. He was three years old, sixteen hands high, strongly built and, save for three white

feet, was jet black. His owner was afraid of him and was glad to present him to Sheridan.

Grant was greatly delighted when he heard of Sheridan's final and decisive victory at Cedar Creek. The cavalry officer he had drafted from the West and whom the War Department had thought "too little to handle the cavalry" had justified Grant's forecast that he would prove himself "big enough for the purpose." A hundred shotted guns announced the tidings to the Army of the Potomac and blared the news into the Confederate lines at Petersburg. To Washington Grant telegraphed: "Turning what bid fair to be a disaster into a glorious victory, stamps Sheridan what I have always thought him—one of the ablest of generals." In conversation with Porter and others on his staff, Grant added: "Sheridan's courageous words and brilliant deeds encourage his commanders as much as they inspire his subordinates." There perhaps is to be found the chief reason for Grant's enthusiasm for Sheridan and the over-praise that he frequently bestowed upon him. Sheridan inspired and encouraged his commanders as much as he inspired the soldiers on the field of battle. Sheridan was a tonic for Grant's soul.

Winchester and Cedar Creek made Sheridan a major-general in the Regular Army; Charles A. Dana was sent down to his headquarters to deliver the new commission in person. Struck with the army's enthusiasm for Sheridan, Dana said to him: "I wish you would explain one thing to me. Here I find all these people of every rank—generals, sergeants, corporals, and private soldiers; in fact everybody—manifesting a personal affection for you that I have never seen in any other army, not even in the Army of the Tennessee for Grant. I have never seen anything like it. Tell us, what is the reason?"

"Mr. Dana," replied Sheridan, "I long ago made up my mind that it was not a good plan to fight battles with paper orders—that is, for the commander to stand on a hill in the rear and send aides-de-camp with written orders to the

different commanders. My practice has always been to fight in the front rank."

To that Dana answered: "General, that is dangerous; in the front rank a man is much more liable to be killed than he is in the rear."

"Well," said Sheridan, "I know that there is a certain risk in it; but, in my judgment, the advantage is much greater than the risk, and I have come to the conclusion that that is the right thing to do. That is the reason the men like me. They know that when the hard pinch comes I am exposed just as much as any of them."

"But are you never afraid?" asked Dana.

"If I was I should not be ashamed of it," answered Sheridan. "If I should follow my natural impulse, I should run away always at the beginning of the danger. The men who say they are never afraid in a battle do not tell the truth."

Chiding Sheridan for his recklessness at the battle of Five Forks, General Porter said: "It seems to me that you have exposed yourself today in a manner hardly justifiable on the part of a commander of such an important movement." Sheridan's reply indicates one of the secrets of his success in war: "I have never in my life taken a command into battle and had the slightest desire to come out alive unless I won."

Grant's and Sherman's high opinion of Sheridan was not shared by some of the intelligent officers who served with him. Rutherford B. Hayes, nineteenth President of the United States, who served as a colonel under General George Crook in the campaign with Sheridan in the Shenandoah Valley, attributed the victory at Fisher Hill to the plans and ability of General Crook. "General Sheridan," he wrote, "is a whole-souled, brave man, and believes in Crook, his old class- and roommate at West Point. Intellectually, he is not Crook's equal, so that as I said, General Crook is the brains of this army."

General Crook was one of the ablest and most conscientious officers of the war and perhaps the greatest of the



Indian fighters thereafter; he knew Sheridan well, having been associated with him at West Point, on the Pacific Coast, and in the campaigns in Virginia, and entertained a most unfavorable opinion of his classmate and commander. In his autobiography he states that at Cedar Creek defeat was turned into victory, largely through the good management of General H. G. Wright. After the battle, Crook was sitting about the campfire with other officers, when Sheridan, greatly elated, said to him: "Crook, I am going to get much more credit for this than I deserve; for had I been here in the morning, the same thing would have taken place, and had I not returned today, the same thing would have taken place." In other words, Sheridan confessed that the early panic caused by Early's unexpected attack would have occurred even had he been present, and that General Wright would have checked the rout and driven Early back even if Sheridan had not made the ride from Winchester. Twenty-five years after the battle of Cedar Creek, on December 26th, 1899, General Crook visited the battlefield. His *Diary* for that day reveals deep scorn of Sheridan for taking, after the battle of Cedar Creek, honors which were not due him and for not giving credit to those who were responsible for the victory:

"After examining the grounds and the position of the troops after twenty-five years which have elapsed and in the light of subsequent events, it renders General Sheridan's claims and his subsequent actions in allowing the general public to remain under the impressions regarding his part in these battles, when he knew they were fiction, all the more contemptible. The adulations heaped on him by a grateful nation for his supposed genius turned his head, which, added to his natural disposition, caused him to bloat his little carcass with debauchery and dissipation, which carried him off prematurely."

Major-General John M. Palmer, another officer of high intelligence and proven gallantry, likewise entertained a most unfavorable opinion. Palmer, who had served with Sheridan under Rosecrans in the battle of Stone River and

at Chickamauga as commander of the First Division, was later governor of Illinois, United States Senator, and in 1896 the Presidential candidate of the National Party, or Gold Democrats. In 1867 Palmer wrote: "I know 'Phil' well . . . Have made two campaigns and have shared two great battles with him . . . Stone River and Chickamauga. In both he was whipped out of his boots, and in both he gained more reputation by his pretense than by his acts. He was then, and still is, a humbug."

It was Grant's intention that, when Sheridan had freed the Shenandoah Valley, he should raid further South and join Sherman's army, then marching northward and driving Johnston before him. Sheridan never accepted this plan and capitalized on the leeway which Grant had given him to throw difficulties in its way. When Sheridan received Grant's instructions in the early part of February of 1865, he read them and then handed them to his chief of staff, General James W. Forsythe. According to Wilson, Forsythe read the orders and asked, "General, you are going to join Sherman?" Sheridan answered, "No." Forsythe then inquired, "How are you going to get out of it? This order is positive and explicit." Sheridan reiterated, "I'm not going to join Sherman." "Why?" asked Forsythe. "I will tell you why," said Sheridan. "This campaign will end the war. The Army of the Potomac will never move from its present position unless we join them and pull them out. This cavalry corps, and the Army of the Potomac of which it is a part, have got to wipe Lee out before Sherman and his army reach Virginia."

Instead of following Grant's and Sherman's wishes, Sheridan marched across Virginia, leaving devastated fields, ruined mills, and cut railroads behind him, and turned up on Grant's right before Petersburg the last week in March of 1865. Of this friendly disobedience Sheridan says: "The transfer of my command from the Shenandoah Valley to the field of operations in front of Petersburg was not anticipated by General Grant." When Grant heard of his arrival he summoned him to headquarters at City Point, where Sheridan

arrived on March 26th. The first man he met was Grant's chief of staff, Rawlins. Before conducting Sheridan to Grant's quarters, Rawlins in his vehement manner voiced his strong objection to Grant's plan to send Sheridan down to Sherman. This, no doubt, strengthened Sheridan in his determination to oppose such a move.

In his usual matter-of-fact way, Grant greeted Sheridan with "How are you?", and waited for Sheridan to give him an account of his march from Winchester and his reasons for not joining Sherman. Grant remarked that it was a rare thing for a general voluntarily to deprive himself of independence, and that he should not suffer for it. What he meant was that in the Valley of Virginia, or marching southward towards Sherman, Sheridan had an independent command, whereas now he was a part of Grant's army. It was difficult for Grant to be displeased with Sheridan.

Grant then told Sheridan that he was to cut loose from the Army of the Potomac, cross the Roanoke River, and join Sherman. To this Sheridan entered his strong protest, telling Grant that it would make a bad impression if he traveled south to help Sherman crush Johnston and then turned north with Sherman to help destroy Lee. It would create the impression that Grant's army alone was unequal to the task, whereas he was sure that the Army of the Potomac could crush Lee and end the war unaided. Grant then told him that that part of his orders instructing him to join Sherman was merely a "blind" and that Sheridan was to operate against Lee's right and be in at the death. He had included the instructions about joining Sherman so that in the event that the cavalry operations against Lee were not a complete success, the cavalry could join Sherman, and the people would not be discouraged by what might seem to them a complete failure. "This," says Porter, "was Grant's little secret, which he had kept from all of the staff, and revealed to the cavalry commander only at the last moment." Sheridan went off in high feather. He was to have his way, and a union with Sherman was not to dim the luster of the victory in which his cavalry was to take so great a part.

The next day Sheridan received a message from Grant saying: "General Sherman will be here this evening to spend a few hours. I should like to have you come down." Sherman had come up from Goldsboro, North Carolina to confer with Grant about the final movements of their armies. With much misgiving, for he knew with what zeal and enthusiasm Sherman could present his views, Sheridan started for City Point. It was midnight when he reached Grant's cabin, but Grant and Sherman were still up and talking over their plans. The greetings over, Sherman rehearsed his plans to march north to join Grant's army around Petersburg, and said he would like to have Sheridan's cavalry come south and join him. To this Sheridan entered emphatic dissent. The dispute between the two fiery soldiers waxed hot until Grant at length put an end to it by repeating what he had told Sheridan the day before: that the instructions to join Sherman were a "blind" to cover any possible check to the cavalry.

That explanation, however, did not completely satisfy Sherman. The next morning, while Sheridan was still abed, Sherman came to his quarters and renewed the argument, but desisted when he saw that Sheridan was unalterably opposed. The plan to have Sheridan join with Sherman and then smash Johnston and Lee between the two armies was undoubtedly sound. Grant's acquiescence in Sheridan's refusal was no doubt due partly to the fact that he was now infected with Sheridan's own enthusiastic belief that he could end the war with one swift and mighty blow. It is likewise indisputable that Sheridan objected strongly to the plan of his seniors because of his ambition to be the spearhead in the closing attack and have a chief part in the final victory. He felt there was much more glory for him if he remained with Grant and led the assault on Lee than if he became an auxiliary to Sherman.

All preparations had been made for the final blow when on March 30th Grant informed Sheridan: "The heavy rain of today will make it impossible for us to do much until it dries up a little, or we get roads around our rear repaired." Greatly disturbed and convinced that a suspension of opera-

tions would be a serious mistake, Sheridan mounted his big gray pacer, Breckenridge, and started through the rain and mud for Grant's headquarters. Finding Grant occupied with Rawlins at the moment, Sheridan stepped out of his cabin and joined a number of officers about the campfire. Full of courage and resolution, Sheridan roused every flagging spirit and converted every man who had counseled delay on account of the weather. One of the group asked Sheridan: "How do you expect to supply your command with forage if this weather lasts?" "Forage?" said Sheridan, "I'll get up all the forage I want. I'll haul it out, if I have to set every man in the command to corduroying roads, and corduroy every mile of them, from the railroad to Dinwiddie. I tell you, I'm ready to start out tomorrow, and go to smashing things."

Knowing well how Grant was affected by the temper of his subordinates, these officers urged Sheridan to repeat his statements to Grant. Sheridan expressed some reluctance to obtrude his views upon his chief, but the officers still urged this course. Shortly afterwards, Sheridan joined Grant at Ingalls's headquarters. Ingalls retired, and then Grant and his great trooper began their conference. Sheridan urged him not to suspend the operations because of the rain and the mud. Since the cavalry was already on the move in spite of the difficulties, Sheridan urged the view that, if operations were suspended, the army might suffer such ridicule as did the army of Burnside for its famous "mud march" after the battle of Fredericksburg. Inspired by Sheridan's enthusiasm, Grant finally said, "We will go on."

When Grant said, "We will go on," he always meant it. Sheridan had fired the engine within Grant. This was what Grant meant when he had said of Sheridan after his victory at Cedar Creek, "Sheridan's courageous words and brilliant deeds encourage his commanders as much as they inspire his subordinates."

In the last act of the drama of the Civil War Sheridan was the chief actor. First came his great smash at Five Forks, where he defeated Pickett and took nearly six thou-

sand prisoners. It was after this battle that Sheridan relieved General G. K. Warren of his command of the Fifth Corps. Before the battle Grant had given Sheridan authority to remove Warren if he thought best. Sheridan was greatly annoyed by the slowness of Warren in bringing up his troops in time for the battle. While he was waiting for Warren to arrive, he dismounted from his horse and, pacing up and down like a caged animal, struck one fist into the palm of the other hand, exclaiming, "This battle must be fought and won before the sun goes down!"

Warren had a splendid record with the Army of the Potomac. He was chief engineer under Meade at Gettysburg, and it was his quick action on the morning of the second day's battle in sending troops to occupy Little Round Top that played a great part in saving the day for the Union Army. With Appomattox just eight days away, to be relieved for slowness in bringing his troops up was indeed a tragedy for him. Although Warren was exonerated by the court of inquiry during the administration of President Hayes, tragedy followed him even to the end, for he died before the decision of the court was made known. So deeply did he feel the wrong which had been done him that he requested that he not be buried in his uniform and that there be no military display and no emblems of his profession about his coffin.

In the fight at Five Forks Sheridan was the very incarnation of battle. During a critical moment he seized his crimson and white battle flag and, waving it above his head, rode up and down in front of the line, shouting encouragement to his men, swearing, praying, entreating, and shaking his fist. A man on the skirmish line had been wounded in the neck, and the blood was spurting out as Sheridan rode by. Crying "I am killed," the man dropped to the ground. "You're not hurt a bit," cried Sheridan. "Pick up your gun, man, and move right on to the front." So great was the magnetic effect of Sheridan's presence and his words that the wounded soldier snatched up his musket, rushed forward again a few paces, and fell dead.

Sheridan delivered his next great blow at Sailor's Creek on April 6th, where he cut off and captured Ewell's corps of Lee's army. On the 5th of April Sheridan's scout, Campbell, rode up to Grant's headquarters; taking out of his mouth a small pellet of tinfoil, he opened it and pulled out a sheet of tissue paper on which was written a message from Sheridan: "I wish you were here yourself; I feel confident of capturing the Army of Northern Virginia if we exert ourselves. I see no escape for General Lee."

That evening Sheridan sent a second message reiterating his wish that Grant come to the front and expressing the opinion that the time had come to compel Lee to surrender. When Grant read the message he said to Rawlins, "What do you think of it?" Rawlins replied: "It looks well; but you know Sheridan is always a little sanguine." Grant then said, "Well, let us go"; calling his orderly he told him to take the saddle off his pony, Jeff Davis, and put it on the big bay, Cincinnatus. Grant and Rawlins reached Sheridan's headquarters after midnight. As they were waiting for supper, Sheridan sketched out on the back of a letter the positions of Lee's army and his own troops. With his eyes flashing, he exclaimed: "We will have them! Every man of them! That is, if you can only get Meade's army up. I want him to take this position, so I can swing around there. Then we'll have every mother's son of them."

After asking several questions, Grant remarked: "Lee is in a bad fix. It will be difficult for him to get away." Whereupon Sheridan exclaimed: "Damn him, he can't get away. We'll have his whole army. We'll have every -- -- of them."

To this Grant responded: "That's a little too much to expect. I think if I were Lee, I could escape at least with some of my men."

After the victory at Sailor's Creek, when seven thousand prisoners were captured, Sheridan sat down before the campfire and wrote out this dispatch to Grant: "Up to the present time we have captured Generals Ewell, Kershaw, Barton, Corse, Defoe, and Custis Lee, several thou-

sand prisoners, fourteen pieces of artillery and caissons, and a large number of wagons. If the thing is pressed, I think Lee will surrender." He was the more hopeful of that because Ewell, who was his prisoner and was sitting near him around the fire, considered the struggle hopeless and urged him to demand Lee's surrender.

The next day Grant sent his first note to Lee and opened the correspondence which led to Lee's surrender on the 9th of April. Lee's flag of truce was brought in through Sheridan's lines; word was immediately sent to Grant, who soon made his appearance. When Grant rode up to where Sheridan and Ord were standing in the street at Appomattox he said, "How are you, Sheridan?" "First rate, thank you. How are you?" was Sheridan's reply. Then Grant said, "Is General Lee up there?" "Yes," said Sheridan. "Well, then," said Grant, "let us go up." They then rode together to the McLean house, where Lee awaited Grant.

Grant always paid full tribute to Sheridan and the part he had played in the ending of the war. "Sheridan," he wrote, "led the pursuit of Lee. He went after him almost with the force of volition, and the country owes him a great debt of gratitude for the manner in which he attacked that retreat. It was one of the incomparable things of the war."

Sheridan was anxious to ride at the head of his troops at the grand review in Washington on May 23rd and 24th, but Grant ordered him to Texas to compel the surrender of the Confederate forces under Kirby Smith. He also informed Sheridan of a matter not mentioned in the written instructions. This was that he looked upon the invasion of Mexico by Maximilian as a part of the rebellion itself because of the encouragement it had received from the Confederacy, and that secession would never be completely suppressed until the French and Austrian invaders were driven from the neighboring country.

Hesseltine states that, on the evening of April 10th, after Grant had written a letter to Sherman telling of Lee's surrender, he rose from his writing table and said to the mem-



bers of his staff who were present, "Now for Mexico!"<sup>1</sup> Grant warned Sheridan that he must act with great caution because Seward, the Secretary of State, was strongly opposed to the use of American troops on the Mexican border in any way that might involve the United States in a war with France.

When he arrived in Texas, Sheridan did all he could to encourage the army under Juárez, and created the impression among the followers of Maximilian that he was about to cross the Rio Grande and join the army of the former president. This led Maximilian's followers to abandon considerable territory in northern Mexico. During the Winter and Spring of 1866 Sheridan sent large supplies of war munitions to the Mexican army. Had it not been for the restraining hand of Seward, our army would have entered Mexico, an act which would have courted war with France. Sheridan was keen to cross the Rio Grande and drive out the French. In a letter to Grant he said: "I have had many difficulties and delays in getting these cavalry columns together and in their magnificent trim; but I am now out of the woods, and only hope that I may have the pleasure of crossing the Rio Grande with them with our face turned toward the City of Mexico."

Commenting on the part he played in the final drama in Mexico, Sheridan said, "I doubt very much whether such results could have been achieved without the presence of an American army on the Rio Grande, which, be it remembered, was sent there because, in General Grant's words, 'The French invasion of Mexico was so closely associated with the Rebellion as to be essentially a part of it.'"

When Grant was inaugurated as President on March 4th, 1869, he made Sherman General of the Army and Sheridan lieutenant-general. This was a terrible blow to Meade, who stigmatized it as "the cruelest and meanest act of injustice," and expressed the hope that the man who perpetrated it would some day be made to feel so. The

---

<sup>1</sup> Hesseltine, *Ulysses S. Grant — Politician*, P. 52.

elevation of Sheridan also broke the heart of another great soldier, General Thomas, the hero of Chickamauga and Nashville.

Young reports Grant's defense of his action in advancing Sheridan to the rank of lieutenant-general over Meade and Thomas:

"When I made him a lieutenant-general, there was some criticism. Why not Thomas or Meade? I have the utmost respect for those generals. No one has more. But when the task of selection came I could not put any man ahead of Sheridan. He ranked Thomas. He had waived his rank to Meade, and I did not think his magnanimity should operate against him when the time came for awarding the higher honors of the war."<sup>1</sup>

To Senator George F. Hoar, Grant expressed his admiration for Sheridan in these terms:

"I believe General Sheridan has no superior as a general, either living or dead, and perhaps not an equal. People think he is only capable of leading an army in battle, or to do a particular thing he is told to do; but I mean all the qualities of a commander, which enable him to direct over as large a territory as any two nations can cover in war. He has judgment, prudence, foresight, and power to deal with dispositions needed in a great war."

Splendid as were Sheridan's achievements in the closing scenes of the war at Appomattox, Meade and Thomas were both stronger and loftier characters and contributed more to saving the Union.

Like his great chieftain, Sheridan finished his *Memoirs* just a few days before his death on August 5th, 1888. Of the three books of recollections these three great soldiers left behind them, Grant's is predominant as a lucid military record; Sheridan's ranks second. Sherman's book, while not as clear and trustworthy as either of the others, is a much more interesting and entertaining volume.

Sheridan has been characterized perhaps best by John Hay, who saw him one day at a reception at the home of

---

Young, *Around the World with General Grant*, Vol. II, P. 298.

the Secretary of the Navy, Gideon Welles: "Sheridan was the lion, looking, as Miss Hooper says, as if he would blow up on short provocation. A mounted torpedo, someone once called him—inflammable little Jack of Clubs—to whom be all praise."

Sheridan did not share the opinion of many that Grant's generalship in the Virginia battles was inferior to his leadership in the western campaigns. Referring to Grant's disappointments in Virginia in the campaign of the Summer of 1864, Sheridan said:

"But so far as he was concerned, the only apparent effect of these discomfitures was to make him all the more determined to discharge successfully the stupendous trust committed to his care and to bring into play the manifold resources of his well-ordered military mind. He guided every subordinate then, and in the last days of the rebellion, with a fund of common sense and superiority of intellect, which have left an impress so distinct as to exhibit his great personality. When his military history is analyzed after the lapse of years, it will show even more clearly than now that during these, as well as in his previous campaigns, he was the steadfast center about and on which everything else turned."

At the Republican Convention in Chicago in 1880 General Grant's name was put in nomination for a third term and his 306 delegates clung to him to the end; on the thirty-sixth ballot the delegate from the Territory of Wyoming cast a vote for "General Philip H. Sheridan." Sheridan, who was sitting on the platform as a spectator, immediately stepped forward and in his bluff soldier manner said: "I am very much obliged to the delegate from Wyoming for mentioning my name in this convention; but there is no way in which I could accept a nomination from this convention, if it were possible, unless I should be permitted to turn it over to my best friend."

His "best friend," of course, was Grant.

# J

## Grant and Wilson

**H**amilton Fish, Secretary of State under Grant, once inquired whom he would have selected as army commanders in the event of the death of Sherman, Sheridan, and Schofield. Grant replied that there were others coming forward who could well fill their places, and then named Upton, Mackenzie, and Wilson, in the order given.

Upton, celebrated for his famous fight with Wade H. Gibbes of South Carolina at West Point in 1859, was the hero of the Bloody Angle at Spottsylvania in 1864 and led the charge at Selma, Alabama in 1865. One of the most intelligent and scientific officers of the Civil War, author of important military studies, and regarded as the ideal soldier, he fell by his own hand when he was forty-two years of age. Ranald S. Mackenzie graduated number one in the class of 1862 at West Point and participated in nearly all the battles of the Army of the Potomac from Fredericksburg to Appomattox. He rose to the command of a cavalry division in the Army of the James. After the war he was one of the most noted and successful Indian fighters. He campaigned in Texas; and after Custer's battle at Little Big Horn, he was transferred from Texas to Nebraska and Wyoming, where he fought under General Crook. The Indians called him "Bad Hand" because he had lost several fingers as a result of a Civil War wound. Grant said of him: "I regard Mackenzie

as the most promising young officer in the Army. Graduating at West Point, as he did, during the second year of the War, he had won his way up to the command of a corps (division) before its close. This he did upon his own merit and without influence."

James Harrison Wilson, one of these three young generals whom Grant thought capable of replacing his chief captains, served with Grant, both on his staff and as a cavalry commander in the three great campaigns of Vicksburg, Chattanooga, and Virginia. He did not finish the Virginia campaign with Grant, but reorganized and commanded the cavalry under Thomas at Nashville, and in 1865 led the greatest cavalry movement of the entire war in a raid through Alabama and Georgia. He was the youngest and one of the most brilliant of the "Grant Men." Grant was profoundly influenced by his counsel and advice, and it was he who first suggested to Grant the plan of campaign which resulted in the capture of Vicksburg.

Wilson was born on September 2nd, 1837 near Shawneetown, Illinois. He attended the local schools, spent one Winter at McKendrie College in St. Clair County, and then entered West Point on June 3rd, 1855. The most brilliant member of that class was a cadet by the name of McFarland, "with the mind of a La Place and the skill of a Vauban," whose very scientific attainments kept him engaged during the war on fortifications and seacoast defenses and prevented him from gaining renown on the field of battle.

Although he received no encouragement from the faculty, Wilson made good use of the library at West Point; the fruit of the many hours spent there was later manifested in his numerous literary works. Colonel Hardee, author of *Hardee's Tactics* and later a Confederate general, was the commandant. Like Grant, Wilson revealed himself as a superb horseman at West Point. It was his well-known horsemanship on the field of battle which led to his appointment as commander of a division of cavalry in the Army of the Potomac despite the fact that his experience had been entirely that of an engineer and a staff officer.

Among those of Wilson's class who won distinction were Horace Porter, of Grant's staff; Merritt, one of Sheridan's cavalry generals; Wilcox, a general in Lee's army; and Daniel McCook, of the famous "Fighting McCooks." Wilson took part in one of the numerous fist fights which were then common at the academy. His antagonist was a cadet from Virginia, McCreery, who had for his second Gibbes of South Carolina. Gibbes had expressed the picturesque wish that the Yankees were possessed of a neck which stretched from West Point to Storm King Mountain and that he could sever its head with one blow of his sword. This same Gibbes, who had the fight with Upton, pulled the lanyard on the first gun fired against Fort Sumter and saw the last one fired at Appomattox.

As a second lieutenant of engineers, Wilson was ordered to Fort Vancouver on the Columbia River and arrived there in 1860. Unhappy to be building roads in the Oregon wilderness when a tempest was beginning to rage in the nation, he wrote letters, asking for assignment to active duty in the East, to the Secretary of War, Simon Cameron; to John A. Logan, who represented his home district in Congress; and to John A. McClernand, a friend of his father who was later to be unhappily associated with Wilson in the campaign against Vicksburg. On July 13th, 1861, he finally received orders to report to the chief of his engineering corps at Washington.

A number of officers returning to the East for the war joined his ship, *The Golden Gate*, at San Francisco; among them was Captain James Birdseye McPherson. The two young engineers became fast friends and talked much together of the part they hoped to play in the war. When the ship stopped at Acapulco on August 9th, a copy of *The New York Herald*, giving an account of the first part of the battle of Bull Run, was brought on board. Wilson mounted a chair and, amid great enthusiasm, read the tidings of what appeared to be a glorious victory. All on board thought the war now would soon be over. Wilson and McPherson had a celebration on shore, yet felt a little dis-

appointment that the great issue had been settled without their aid. But when they reached Panama on August 15th, the latest New York papers again were brought on board, and Wilson once more mounted a chair to read the news. This time it was not so glorious, for it told of the rout and defeat of the Union Army at Bull Run.

Arrived at Washington, Wilson called upon the general-in-chief, General Scott. In melancholy tones the aged general said:

"The country is torn by treason and rebellion. It has no guide and no army. I am old and feeble, and the men I have depended upon to help bear my burdens, and, if need be, to take my place, have sent in their resignations and are going over to the enemy. Lee has gone, Beauregard has gone, Johnston has gone, Hardee has gone, and the best of the younger officers are following them. How we shall make head against them, or how it will all end, I dare not say, but my heart is full of doubt and sorrow."

To this Wilson, the young engineer officer, responded:

"Pardon me, General; all the best men have not gone and are not going; You should not forget that we have McClellan, McDowell, Sumner, Rosecrans, Buell, Thomas, Anderson, Sherman, Wright, and many other gallant officers, both regulars and volunteers, who will stand by the old flag to the last. The Northern states, with all their resources, are united in support of the Union and the Constitution, and in the end, with you to guide us, we shall not fail."

Wilson accompanied McPherson on a visit to the Army of the Potomac across the river to renew acquaintanceship with old friends and to dine with McDowell. McDowell was so intent upon his food that he had little time for conversation; they were amazed to see him top off a heavy dinner by eating an entire watermelon. As they rode back to Washington that night they both agreed that a glutton who had, indeed, already demonstrated his lack of military capacity, could never be a successful leader of soldiers in battle.

Wilson's first important assignment was as an engineer

with the successful Port Royal expedition on the South Carolina coast in November of 1861 under the command of General T. W. ("Tim") Sherman. Here he exhibited great enterprise and ability in exploring and charting the difficult passages in the vicinity of Savannah. He urged Sherman to attack and played a gallant part in the successful assault on Fort Pulaski, the Savannah River stronghold which guarded the city. This victory closed the river and the port of Savannah to the blockade-runners. Had Sherman followed Wilson's advice and attacked Savannah itself, he probably would have avoided the necessity of waiting three years to occupy it. It was on the Port Royal and Fort Pulaski expedition that Wilson first met Adam Badeau, a correspondent of *The New York Express* and an aide-de-camp to General Gillmore, and whom Wilson afterwards commended to Grant as his military secretary.

At the end of August, 1862 Wilson was directed to report at Washington, where the chief of his engineering bureau asked him what post would best suit his wishes. Engineer officers were few and in great demand by the generals commanding the ever-growing armies; Grant himself had few and was calling for all who could be spared. The assistant to the chief told Wilson that he might join Grant if he had no other preference. Since his brothers and his friends from the West were in Grant's army, Wilson gladly assented to these orders.

The Antietam campaign was then under way. Anxious to see action with the Army of the Potomac, Wilson asked permission to serve temporarily on McClellan's staff before joining Grant. McClellan was happy to have him, and Wilson, together with Custer, reported for duty at McClellan's headquarters at Rockville, Maryland. Leaping his grey horse over the stone fences, Wilson was one of that group of young West Pointers who rode over that bloodiest of the Civil War battlefields with McClellan's orders. Never troubled by modesty, he took it upon himself to send a message to General Hooker, who was leaving the field with a foot wound, urging him to return to the firing line, even



if he had to be carried on a stretcher, "with his bugles blowing and his corps flag flying over him."

Some days after the battle of Antietam, Wilson was on leave at Washington and interviewed General McClelland, who had just paid a visit to the army at Antietam in company with President Lincoln. McClelland told Wilson that Lincoln had given him permission to raise troops in the West for the purpose of opening up the Mississippi. He offered Wilson a place on his staff, and sent word to McClellan suggesting that, since he was about to be relieved, he should seek the united command of the Mississippi Valley.

McClellan replied through Wilson that he had been so closely associated with the Army of the Potomac in its organization and in its battles that he did not feel he could take another command, even if it were offered him. To this the presumptuous Wilson answered that if McClellan were not offered an independent command, he should take a corps or a division; failing that, a brigade; and if a brigade were not to be had, he should return home to raise a regiment. If he failed to achieve a colonelcy, he should shoulder a musket and serve as a private soldier. McClellan strangely was not offended by this extraordinary speech; indeed, when he parted with Wilson he informed him that if he ever took another command he would like to have him on his staff.

Wilson reported for duty at Grant's headquarters at La Grange, Tennessee on November 8th, 1862 to receive assignment as chief topographical engineer of the Army of the Tennessee under his old friend, McPherson. At his first meeting with Grant, who had returned from Memphis, Wilson suffered the traditional disappointment at Grant's appearance and unmilitary manner. He received the impression, which never changed, that Grant was a poor organizer and military theorist and that his successes were due purely to his adoption of broad general principles. Soon after Wilson joined Grant, he was appointed inspector-general of the Tenth Army Corps under General David Hunter, but Grant managed to keep him on his staff by

making him inspector-general of the Army of the Tennessee.

Rawlins, Grant's adjutant-general, took an immediate liking to Wilson and gave him his full confidence. He talked with Wilson about Grant's weakness in drink; it was not as bad, he said, as the newspapers or Grant's enemies made out, and in no case affected his sense of duty. Nevertheless, he considered that Grant's true friends should rally to his support. "I am told you don't drink," Rawlins informed Wilson; "but you should know that there are lots of men in this army, some on Grant's staff, who not only drink themselves, but like to see others drink, and whenever they get a chance, they tempt their chief, and I want you to help me to clean them out."

Wilson played an important part in the movements against Vicksburg. Not only did he urge Grant as the senior commander in the military district to take command in person, but he proposed the campaign by river, rather than the overland attack which had bogged down after the Confederates broke the line of supplies at Holly Springs, Mississippi. Wilson contended that all the available forces under Grant's command, not merely an army or a division or the levies raised by McClernand, should be sent against the fortress. Wilson reminded Grant that McClernand enjoyed the favor of both Lincoln and Stanton, and warned him that he would be supplanted by one of his own subordinates unless he acted promptly. Rawlins seconded this view, with the fortunate result that Grant proceeded to Young's Point on January 30th, 1863 to take command of the army operating against Vicksburg.

It was in a conversation with Rawlins that Wilson first proposed the plan of running the batteries with the gunboats and transports and marching the troops by land to a point south of Vicksburg at which they could be ferried over the river and then attack the city from the East and the rear. Answering the objections raised as to the possible losses the vessels might suffer when running the Vicksburg batteries, Wilson recalled that the wooden ships had

successfully passed the Confederate batteries at Hilton Head in South Carolina when he accompanied T. W. Sherman's expedition the year before. This experience convinced Wilson that the ships could run the batteries at Vicksburg without serious loss. He predicted that the loss would not be more than one in five; as a matter of fact, it was only one in nine.

Shortly after Grant established his headquarters at Milliken's Bend, McPherson, Sherman, McClernand, and others were viewing the city from the western shore of the Mississippi. Wilson and Rawlins crawled out on the butt of a cottonwood tree that had fallen into the river and examined the different plans proposed for taking Vicksburg. Wilson outlined the three possible plans.

The first was to move by the Union left and try to reach Vicksburg from the North by the Yazoo River or the Yazoo Pass; this was tried and failed. The second was to make a frontal attack on the stronghold; this was dismissed as too dangerous for half-trained and poorly disciplined troops such as comprised the besieging army. The third plan was ultimately adopted only after considerable time and labor had been expended on the first and on an alternative scheme to invest the river below Vicksburg by a four-hundred-mile journey through rivers and bayous west of the Mississippi. It was proposed to run the batteries at night with the transports and barges and march the troops overland west of the river to a point south of Vicksburg.

Rawlins was much interested in the daring project, and shortly brought the matter up at Grant's table when most of the leading generals were dining with him. There had been a general discussion of plans for taking the city, and the meeting was about to break up when Rawlins said, "Wilson and I have a plan for taking Vicksburg none of you have referred to yet."

"What is it, Rawlins; what is it?" Sherman said.

"Oh," said Rawlins, "you will condemn it as too dangerous."

"Never mind that," said Sherman, "let us have it."

Rawlins then outlined Wilson's plan to run the batteries at night with the transports and gunboats and march the troops by land to a crossing south of the city. With characteristic emphasis Sherman denounced the project: "It can't be done. It is impracticable. The transports will be destroyed. The enemy's guns will sink them or set them afire." None of the officers present championed the plan and Grant remained silent. However, in his *Memoirs*, written long after, he states that it had been his purpose from the first to run the batteries if the other plans failed.

The failure of all the other designs forced a resort to that proposed by Wilson. On the night of April 14th the great feat was accomplished and the transports and gunboats were safe below Vicksburg, ready to ferry the army over to the east side of the Mississippi, whence it could attack the city from the rear.

A curious comment on the casual manner in which military operations were carried on at that time is the fact that Grant had members of his family with him on his headquarters steamboat just beyond the range of the Vicksburg batteries where they could see and hear the great show of the ships running past the forts. One of Grant's children sat on Wilson's knees with arms around his neck, clasping him more tightly with each new crash of the batteries firing at the ships. It was soon after the successful accomplishment of this movement down the river that Grant informed Rawlins that he depended more upon Wilson's judgment in military matters than upon that of anyone else in the army.

After Grant landed his army on the eastern shore of the Mississippi, there occurred a series of engagements from Port Gibson, where McClernand's corps bore the brunt of the fighting, to the investment of Vicksburg. Wilson and Rawlins joined in an ineffectual attempt to establish harmony between Grant and McClernand; but neither was in a mood to be reconciled. McClernand evidently still counted on the backing of Lincoln and was independent and insubordinate. After the struggle at Port Gibson, Wilson and Rawlins suggested to Grant that he ride over and thank

McClermand for his success in that battle. Grant surprised them by refusing to do so, saying McClermand had offended him by asking permission to postpone the crossing of his troops until Governor Yates of Illinois had reviewed them, by taking with him wagons and baggage which Grant had ordered left behind, and by going so far as to bring his bride with him!

Two weeks later, Wilson carried Grant's orders directing McClermand to strengthen his troops at a certain point on the line. When he received the order, McClermand cried out: "I'll be damned if I do it! I'm tired being dictated to. I won't stand it any longer, and you can go back and tell General Grant." This he followed up with a volley of oaths, which Wilson took to be aimed at himself as well as at Grant. Reining his horse alongside of McClermand's, Wilson said: "General McClermand, I am astonished at what you are saying. You surely do not understand the order I have given, and I'll repeat it; and now, General, in addition to your highly insubordinate language, it seems to me that you are cursing me as much as you are cursing General Grant. If this is so, although you are a major-general and I am only a lieutenant-colonel, I will pull you off that horse and beat the boots off you."

McClermand then expressed his regret and said that he was simply "expressing his intense feelings on the subject matter." He invited Wilson to come to his camp for a drink, but Wilson declined; wheeling his horse, he rode back to his headquarters.

The Vicksburg campaign reveals Lincoln at his best in supporting Grant and resisting the cry and clamor to have him removed because of the early failures of the campaign and his alleged bad habits. However, it also shows Lincoln at his worst as a blunderer who interfered in military matters by granting McClermand authority to carry on an independent campaign within Grant's military district without informing his superior.

After the fall of Vicksburg, Wilson, on his own initiative but with Grant's approval, drew up a series of instruc-

tions and regulations for corps and division commanders with reference to their duties and directed them to make thoroughgoing inspections of every branch of the service. This reorganization helped to make the Army of the Tennessee one of the strongest and most successful units of the Union forces. After visiting one corps, Wilson reported to Rawlins as follows: "I have reviewed and inspected nearly all the Sixteenth Army Corps, and not yet seen any troops on the parade ground commanded by a general . . . We want soldiers, not traders; generals, not governors and civil agents. A few hundred thousand bayonets led by clear heads and military rules can crush the rebellion; but a million without military generals can do nothing, except by main strength and awkwardness." Wilson rightly deplored the dispersion of the Army of the Tennessee after Vicksburg and regretted that Grant had paroled the surrendered Confederate troops, most of whom soon found their way back into the ranks of attacking Confederate armies.

After the Union Army under Rosecrans suffered the Chickamauga defeat in September of 1863, Wilson accompanied Grant to Chattanooga, whither Grant had been hastily summoned by an almost panic-stricken government. In January of 1864 he was called to Washington as chief of the Cavalry Bureau. He received the usual harsh greetings from the churlish Stanton, who thought his body too short for his legs. While he was in Washington, a bill was introduced in Congress to revive the grade of lieutenant-general with the purpose of conferring it upon Grant. Although only recently made a brigadier-general, Wilson was frequently consulted by members of Congress as to the advisability of this step because of his close association with Grant in two great campaigns.

When Grant came east and took personal command of the Army of the Potomac, he sent for Sheridan to take command of the cavalry; he appointed Wilson, who had never set a squadron on the field, to the command of the Third Cavalry Division, relieving General Kilpatrick, who was known as "Kilcavalry" and "Little Kill." Sherman,

who had appointed him head of his cavalry when he marched through Georgia, said of Kilpatrick: "I know that Kilpatrick is a damned fool, but I want just that sort of a man to command my cavalry on this expedition."

The appointment of Wilson, an engineer officer who had never commanded cavalry and who was outranked by several officers in the cavalry corps, gave great offense and frequently made Wilson's work difficult and embarrassing despite the fact that Sheridan supported him against those who disparaged his abilities. This ill-feeling was carried to extraordinary lengths when Wilson accompanied Sheridan in the Valley of Virginia campaign. An order had been given for the withdrawal of the cavalry divisions after they had made a reconnaissance towards Shepherdstown and Halltown. It was then that one of Wilson's officers overheard General Wesley Merritt, who was conferring with General Alfred Torbert, say: "Give Wilson the rear, with orders to hold on strongly till we get out of the way. This will delay him, so that the enemy will follow him to Halltown and give him hell, while we return leisurely to our camps at Shepherdstown."

Wilson's cavalry was in the advance when Grant's army crossed the Rappahannock and plunged into the Wilderness. At an anxious moment after one of the first battles, Wilson rode up to Grant's headquarters at the Wilderness Tavern. Seeing him coming, Grant threw up his hand and called out, "It's all right, Wilson, the army is moving towards Richmond."

With his keen military instincts, Wilson was quick to sense the clumsy arrangements governing the conduct of the campaign and the lack of co-ordination and co-operation existing between different officers and corps. Grant was in chief command, but Meade still headed the Army of the Potomac. This meant that two headquarters existed and that all orders to corps and division commanders must first be cleared through Meade. Wilson sensed that co-operation was requested, but never emphatically ordered. One day Meade said to Warren, the famed but ill-starred commander

of the Fifth Corps, "Warren, I want you to co-operate with Sedgwick and see what can be done." Warren thereupon exclaimed: "General Meade, I'll be damned if I'll co-operate with Sedgwick or anyone else. You are the commander of this army, and you can give your orders and I will obey them; or you can put Sedgwick in command and he can give the orders, and I will obey them; or you can put me in command, and I will give the orders, and Sedgwick shall obey them. But I'll be damned if I'll co-operate with Sedgwick or anyone else!"

At the close of the campaign north of the James River, General Grant asked, "Wilson, what is the matter with this army?" Wilson replied: "General, there is a great deal the matter with it, but I can tell you much more easily how to cure it." "How?" asked Grant. "Send for Parker, the Indian chief, and after giving him a tomahawk, a scalping knife, and a gallon of the worst whiskey the commissary department can supply, send him out with orders to bring in the scalps of Major-Generals." With a smile Grant asked, "Whose?" Wilson replied: "Oh, the first he comes to, and so on in succession 'til he gets, at least, a dozen."

Wilson returned, with much damage and loss to his command from the raid against the Danville and the South Side Railroads. Thereafter, he received through General Grant a copy of *The Richmond Examiner* which claimed to give an account of the articles captured in Wilson's headquarters wagon. Among other things, it mentioned a service of church plate, and charged Wilson with being a highwayman, a winebibber, and a "modern Sardanapalus." Strangely enough, Meade called Wilson's attention to the article and through Sheridan demanded that Wilson explain the charge against himself and his command. Sheridan handed the request to Wilson with the remark, "Damn him, give him hell!" Wilson made a satisfactory explanation and denial, and Meade then complimented him and his division.

Grant was greatly displeased with Meade's action and was on the point of removing him from command; Dana



and Rawlins declared that they had never seen Grant so disturbed. Dana's contemporary report to Stanton concerning Meade was very unfavorable. He stated that Grant had reposed great confidence in Meade and liked him, but that he was universally disliked by the other officers, and that his own staff officers hardly dared speak to him unless first spoken to, for fear of his sneers and curses. Dana gave it as his opinion that most of Meade's generals had lost their confidence in him as a commander; in addition, he reported that General Wright, commander of the Sixth Corps, had said that all of Meade's attacks had been made without intelligence or generalship. When the matter of dismissing Meade was discussed at Grant's headquarters, Smith reports that Grant confessed that it might be necessary to relieve him, and that in that event he would put Hancock in command of the Army of the Potomac.

On September 30th, 1864 Wilson was relieved from duty with Grant's army and sent west to take charge of the cavalry in Sherman's forces; Wilson had no direct contact with Grant thereafter. He speedily reorganized the cavalry of the western armies; the reconstituted force played a great part in the resounding victory won by Thomas over Hood at Nashville on December 15th and 16th, 1864. This was one of the most complete victories of the whole war.

In the Spring of 1865 Wilson set out on the greatest cavalry raid of the war, having under him the largest body of horsemen ever commanded by a Union general, Sheridan not excepted. On April 1st he fought and routed the redoubtable Forrest at Ebenezer Church, Alabama; the next day, mounted on his white charger, Sheridan, and his Indian bugler sounding a stirring call, he led the charge on the ramparts at Selma. After that he occupied Montgomery, Alabama, where the Confederate government was first established; he next invested Columbus, Georgia; and was at Macon when the curtain fell on the Confederacy. It was men under Wilson's command who captured Jefferson Davis at Irwinsville and brought him to Macon.

Late in November of 1865 Grant, in company with

staff officers Badeau and Babcock, made a tour of the South and asked Wilson to meet him at Atlanta. Grant was in fine spirits and talked freely and intimately about the war and the future. He had a generous word for all the officers who had served under him, but praised Sheridan and Humphreys<sup>1</sup> as the greatest of his immediate lieutenants. At 11 o'clock Grant dismissed Badeau and Babcock, saying he wished to talk with Wilson alone. In his conversation with Wilson, Grant revealed strong anti-British feeling. He declared, now that Maximilian's empire was collapsing in Mexico, that the United States should dispatch an army into Canada to speed a settlement of the Alabama claims and expel the British, not only from Canada, but from every British colony on the continent. He said the United States could send on such an expedition a half million of the best infantry and fifty thousand of the best cavalry in the world, and that many former Confederate generals would be glad to engage in such an enterprise. The two men talked together until early morning and then retired; Grant had given Wilson a bed in his own room. Wilson, his mind stirred with the great project that Grant had been discussing, was unable to sleep, and after half an hour gave an audible sigh. Whereupon Grant said: "If you can't go to sleep, Wilson, let us get up and finish our conversation." This they did and talked on until breakfast at 8 o'clock.

Wilson resigned from the army in 1870 and engaged in business, travel, and writing. From his pen came biographies of Generals John A. Rawlins and W. F. Smith; with Charles A. Dana as a collaborator, he wrote the life of Grant. He was also the author of *Under The Old Flag*, the story of his war experiences. When the Spanish War broke out in 1898 Wilson went to Porto Rico in command of the Sixth Corps; at the time of the Boxer Rebellion in China he was second in command to General Adna R.

---

<sup>1</sup> Major-General Humphreys had served on the staff of McClellan and had been chief-of-staff to General Meade; thereafter he commanded the Second Corps in Grant's final campaign.

Chaffee. He died, full of years and honors, aged eighty-eight, at Wilmington, Delaware on February 23rd, 1925. He had outlived all the "Grant Men", every other member of Grant's staff, and every corps commander of the Union armies.

# 8

## Grant and Halleck

On February 21st, 1862, soon after the capture of Fort Donelson by Grant's army, an advance was being contemplated against Nashville. At this juncture, General Halleck telegraphed the Assistant Secretary of War, Thomas A. Scott, then at Louisville, the following message:

"General Grant and Commodore Foote say the road is now open [to Nashville]. Can't you come down to the Cumberland and divide the responsibility with me?"

In this message Halleck revealed himself completely as a man who was never willing to assume responsibility for an important movement. His one decision of importance came after he had been made general-in-chief in August of 1862: he ordered General McClellan, then still within striking distance of Richmond, to withdraw his army from the Peninsula and reinforce the army of Major-General John Pope. That decision was one of the most unfortunate of the whole war for the Union cause. This vacillating officer, whose few positive acts were invariably erroneous, was placed in command of all the armies of the United States in July of 1862 and continued in that command, despite his manifest incapacity, until Grant superseded him in February of 1864.

In Gideon Welles's *Diary* for September 29th, 1863 we find this entry: "'Halleck,' Chase said, 'was good for nothing, and everybody knew it but the President.'" McClellan

lan, quick to recognize ability, said that of all men whom he had encountered in high position, Halleck was "the most hopelessly stupid." Welles, who never tires of expressing his contempt for Halleck, wrote of him: "Halleck originates nothing; anticipates nothing; takes no responsibility; suggests nothing; is good for nothing. His being at headquarters is a national misfortune . . . He has suggested nothing; decided nothing; done nothing but scold and smoke and scratch his elbows."

Welles was unquestionably correct in characterizing Halleck's appointment as a "national misfortune." But for the fact that his promotion left Grant in independent command of the Army of the Tennessee, Halleck's presence at army headquarters would have entailed even more disastrous consequences.

Henry Wager Halleck was born January 16th, 1815 at Westernville, Oneida County, New York, a few miles west of Utica. He had an intense dislike for work on the Mohawk River farm of his father and ran away from home. His maternal grandfather took an interest in him and sent him to the Hudson Academy and to Union College. After spending only one year at Union, he received an appointment to West Point in July of 1835. Subsequently, however, he was awarded a bachelor's degree by Union, where his standing had been high enough to insure election to Phi Beta Kappa.

In the class of 1839 at West Point Halleck stood number three in a class of thirty-two. It is difficult to draw any general conclusion from the West Point records of the leading generals in the Union and Confederate armies. Ben Butler said that Grant did not "get enough of West Point in him to hurt him," and that "all of the very successful generals of our war stood near the lower end of their classes at West Point." This, of course, is not true. The two Johnstons, considered by many the ablest officers of the South, stood high in their classes at the academy: Albert Sidney won mathematical honors; Joseph Eggleston graduated number thirteen in a class of forty-six. Robert E. Lee stood number two in the class of 1829; Sherman was number

six in the class of 1840. McPherson, considered by Grant and Sherman as one of the ablest Union commanders, graduated first in the class of 1853. Thomas was number twelve in a class of forty-two members; McClellan stood second in the class of 1842. William F. Smith, perhaps the ablest military mind of either army, stood fourth in the 1845 class of forty-one members.

On the other hand, many of the most successful generals stood far down the list, some in the lower half of the class and some nearly at the bottom. Hancock stood eighteenth among the twenty-five members of the class of 1844. Jackson was rated seventeenth in the class of 1846 which comprised fifty-nine men; Grant's number was twenty-one among the thirty-nine members of the class of 1843. Hooker, always a successful division and corps leader, although less competent as an army commander, stood twenty-ninth of a class of fifty; Sheridan was numbered thirty-four in a class of fifty-two. Custer, the great cavalry leader, graduated at the foot of the class in 1861; Pickett, of Gettysburg fame, likewise graduated at the foot of the list in 1846. John B. Hood, a great fighter who failed as an army commander, was number forty-four in the 1849 class of fifty-two members. James Longstreet, one of the greatest fighting generals of the South, graduated fifty-fourth in a class of sixty-two. Butler's statement is too sweeping; it is true that some of them did. Halleck was one of those who stood almost at the top of their class; measured by the standard of successful performance in military counsel and on the field of action, his proper position among the generals was almost at the end of the list.

Immediately upon graduation, Halleck was commissioned a second lieutenant of engineers. He performed some work on the fortifications of New York harbor, and in 1841 published his first book, an important contribution on the uses of bitumen. He quickly gained such a scientific reputation that in 1843 he was offered, but declined, the professorship of engineering in the Lawrence Scientific School of Harvard. In the Fall of 1844 he accompanied Marshal

Bertrand, who had been with Napoleon at St. Helena and who was then on a visit to the United States, on his return trip to France. There he was introduced to King Louis Philippe's prime minister, Marshal Soult, and was given permission to make a tour of the fortifications of France. This gave him the inspiration to write the *Report on the Means of National Defense* which was published by Congress. He also published in 1846 a series of lectures delivered before the Lowell Institute of Boston on *Elements of Military Art and Science*. This book had a wide circulation among officers during the Civil War.

When the Mexican War broke out, Halleck was sent as a first lieutenant to Monterey, California by way of Cape Horn. During the long seven months' voyage on the transport *Lexington*, he translated Henri Jomini's *Political and Military Life of Napoleon*. Halleck's fame as a translator received honorable mention by General Benjamin Butler. When Butler was in command on the James River during the Civil War, Halleck sent him an aide without first consulting him. When the aide made his appearance at Butler's headquarters he was greeted with:

"Aide-de-camp, sir! Ordered to my staff, sir! I'm sure I do not know what you are to do. I have really nothing for you. All the positions are filled. Now there is General Halleck, what has *he* to do? At a moment when every true man is laboring to his utmost, when the days ought to be forty hours long, General Halleck is translating French books at nine cents a page; and, sir, if you should put those nine cents in a box and shake them up, you would form a clear idea of General Halleck's soul."

In California Halleck was chief of staff in Burton's operations in Lower California, aide-de-camp to Commodore Shubrick, and Lieutenant-Governor of Mazatlan. For meritorious services he was brevetted captain on May 1st, 1847. After the war he served in various posts as an army engineer and took a prominent part in framing the constitution of California. Like many other regular army officers, Halleck resigned his commission in 1854. He had studied law

while he was in the army and now became the head of the leading law firm in California, Halleck, Peachy & Billings. He was offered a seat on the Supreme Court of California and also the office of United States Senator, but chose to remain in the practice of law and as a director of successful business enterprises. In 1855 he married Elizabeth Hamilton, the granddaughter of Alexander Hamilton.

One of the companies of which Halleck was a director was the New Almaden Quicksilver Mine, one of the richest mining properties in California. The United States brought suit against this company on the ground that its title to the property was fraudulent; the government's representative in the case was Edwin M. Stanton, who formed a very unfavorable opinion of Halleck at this time. When Halleck came to Washington in 1861, Stanton warned McClellan, then general-in-chief, not to trust Halleck, whom he characterized as "probably the greatest scoundrel and most bare-faced villain in America," and whom he claimed to have convicted of perjury in the New Almaden Quicksilver Case. A day or two later Halleck warned McClellan against Stanton in almost identical language.<sup>1</sup>

On August 19th, 1861, at the instance of Lieutenant-General Scott, Halleck was commissioned a major-general in the Regular Army and ordered to St. Louis, where he succeeded General Frémont in command of the Department of Missouri. It was Scott's wish that Halleck should succeed him, and for that reason the aged general withheld his retirement until Halleck might come east and be made general-in-chief. The confusion in the Department of Missouri, however, made it necessary to send Halleck to restore order in that theater of the war.

When in command at St. Louis, Halleck learned that

---

<sup>1</sup> As an example of Stanton's duplicity, McClellan quotes from a letter of General E. A. Hitchcock to Halleck dated March 22nd, 1862. According to this letter, Stanton told Hitchcock that he was writing to Halleck to tell him of his confidence in him, and that, although he had appeared against him in the mine case in California, he had never had any other than the highest respect for him. This is a striking proof that Stanton "could say one thing to a man's face, and just the reverse behind his back."



southern sympathizers among the women were showing their contempt for the North by displaying white and red rosettes. Instead of suppressing this disrespect by edict, as Ben Butler did with his celebrated "woman order" at New Orleans, Halleck adopted subtler tactics. He ordered a great quantity of the rosettes bought and distributed them among women of loose character. When the newspapers called attention to the fact that women of the street were wearing these decorations, they immediately disappeared from the breasts of all those who had been showing contempt for the Union soldiers.

It was at St. Louis that Halleck first came in contact with Grant; he had known Sherman since the days when they traveled to California on the same transport. Halleck dealt kindly with Sherman at the time of his nervous breakdown when the newspapers reported that he was insane. When Halleck was appointed to the supreme command, Sherman wrote of him:

"General Halleck was a man of great capacity, of large acquirements, and at the time possessed the confidence of the country and most of the army. I held him in high estimation and gave him credit for the combinations which had resulted in placing this magnificent army of a hundred thousand men well-equipped and provided with a good base at Corinth, from which he could move in any direction."

Halleck failed to send Grant the customary congratulations after the latter's victory at Fort Donelson; instead, in a telegram to McClellan, Halleck claimed the credit for himself and requested that he be rewarded with the post of general-in-chief of the West. Almost as an afterthought, he suggested that Grant and General C. F. Smith be promoted as major-generals. In another telegram to General David Hunter at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, Halleck gave him credit for the victory at Fort Donelson on the ground that he had furnished the troops which had reinforced Grant. On February 19th, three days after the battle, according to Badeau, Halleck reversed himself by

telegraphing McClellan that General C. F. Smith was responsible for the triumph: "Smith, by his coolness and bravery at Fort Donelson when the battle was against us, turned the tide and carried the enemies' outworks. Make him a Major-General. You can't get a better one. Honor him for this victory and the whole country will applaud."

Shortly after the victory at Donelson, Grant wrote to Halleck's chief of staff that, unless objections were forthcoming, he planned to proceed to Nashville, where General Buell's army had arrived, in the hope of clearing away obscurity as to the jurisdiction of their respective commands. On March 2nd, Halleck telegraphed to McClellan:

"I have had no communication with General Grant for more than a week. He left his command without my authority and went to Nashville. His army seems as much demoralized by the victory of Fort Donelson as was that of the Potomac by the defeat of Bull Run. It is hard to censure a successful general immediately after a victory. But I think he richly deserves it. I can get no return, no reports, no information of any kind from him. Satisfied with his victory, he sits down and enjoys it without any regard to the future. I am worn out and tired with this neglect and inefficiency. C. F. Smith is almost the only officer equal to the emergency."

It was not strange that the general-in-chief should be disturbed by such a report. He wired Halleck at once:

"The success of our cause demands that proceedings such as Grant's should at once be checked. Generals must observe discipline as well as private soldiers. Do not hesitate to arrest him at once if the good of the service requires it, and place C. F. Smith in command."

Two days later, taking for his authority an anonymous letter, Halleck telegraphed McClellan: "A rumor has just reached me that since the taking of Fort Donelson Grant has resumed his former bad habit. If so it will account for his repeated neglect of my often-repeated orders. I do not deem it advisable to arrest him at present; but have placed General Smith in command of the expedition up the Tennessee. I think Smith will restore order and discipline."

Commenting on this exchange of telegrams between Halleck and McClellan, Grant says: "Thus in less than two weeks after the victory of Donelson, the two leading generals in the Army were in correspondence as to what disposition should be made of me, and in less than three weeks I was virtually in arrest and without a command."

On March 10th the Adjutant-General of the Army, Lorenzo Thomas, writing on behalf of McClellan, requested of Halleck a full report of Grant's visit to Nashville and his general conduct. After corresponding with Grant, Halleck had already changed his tone and notified Grant that he wished him to assume immediate command of the expedition up the Tennessee. Halleck now wrote Thomas that he was satisfied that Grant had gone to Nashville with good intentions, that there had never been any want of military subordination on his part, and that his failure to make returns as to his forces had been due partly to the failures of colonels of regiments to report to him on their arrival and partly from interruption of telegraphic communications. On March 13th Grant was restored to active command of the expedition up the Tennessee.

Grant had the highest esteem for his old commander at West Point, General C. F. Smith, who had played so gallant a part at Fort Donelson and who had temporarily displaced him. He wrote him, "No one can feel more pleasure than myself at your appointment." When Grant was restored to the command, Smith expressed his pleasure that Grant was again at the head of his army, "from which you were so unceremoniously, and I think, unjustly, stricken down." During this period Grant had twice requested Halleck to relieve him of further duty in the department, saying that he was convinced there were enemies between himself and Halleck who were trying to impair his usefulness.

A few days after these events, Halleck transmitted to Grant copies of the correspondence between himself and Adjutant-General Thomas, but was careful to withhold the complaining telegrams that he had sent to McClellan. In-

stead, he revealed that McClellan had authorized and advised him to discipline Grant, who thereafter supposed that only Halleck's intervention had saved him from arrest and dismissal from the army. It was only through General Adam Badeau's researches for his military history that Grant learned the truth after the war had ended. More than a year after Fort Donelson, General W. B. Franklin met Grant at Memphis. When Grant inquired as to the cause of McClellan's hostility, Franklin replied that McClellan entertained only friendliness. Grant expressed his disbelief on the ground that McClellan had, without reason, ordered Halleck to relieve him after Fort Donelson, and that only Halleck's intervention had saved him. In 1866, when McClellan was in Europe, Grant communicated with him about certain papers which were missing from the files of the office of the general-in-chief during McClellan's tenure of the office. General Marcy, McClellan's former chief of staff, had found a retained copy of the dispatch of March 2nd, 1862 in which Halleck had lodged his complaints about Grant; the original copies of the message and of McClellan's reply had disappeared from the files of the office. General Marcy forwarded to Grant copies of the missing correspondence, and Grant for the first time thus learned of the truth. The inference, of course, is that when Halleck became general-in-chief and controlled the files, he removed the incriminating correspondence, feeling that his reputation would suffer from a revelation of his dealings with Grant, who was now a great military figure and idol. McClellan dismisses the matter abruptly: "As to Halleck's conduct with regard to Grant, no comment by me is necessary. The facts speak for themselves." Young reports Grant's opinion that only his own personal prestige saved him from dismissal from the army: "He [Halleck] was in command, and it was his duty to command as he pleased, but I hardly know what would have become of it as far as I was concerned, had not the country interfered. You see, Donelson was our first clear victory and you will remember

the enthusiasm that came with it. The country saved me from Halleck's displeasure."

Soon after Grant won the bloody battle of Shiloh in April of 1862, Halleck, who had now been made general-in-chief of the Department of the Mississippi, took the field in person. Grant was not displaced but was completely relegated to the background by reason of the fact that Halleck had his headquarters with the army. This so discouraged and disheartened Grant that he determined to resign and would have done so but for Sherman's earnest intervention. He was, however, permitted to move his headquarters to Memphis where, on July 11th, he received from General Halleck a message ordering him to report at headquarters at Corinth to receive his transfer to a different field. Uncertain as to whether he should take his staff with him, Grant telegraphed Halleck for information. Halleck sent him this brusque reply: "This place will be your headquarters. You can judge for yourself." Grant reached Corinth on July 15th; although Halleck remained until the 17th, he furnished no information whatever as to the army's situation.

Halleck had proved his complete incompetence as a field commander. He had advanced "with pick and shovel," as Sherman put it, twenty miles from Shiloh to Corinth in three weeks; the splendid army of one hundred and twenty thousand men which had entered Corinth on May 30th was so dispersed as to put Grant temporarily on the defensive. During this period when he treated Grant so shabbily, Halleck wrote on May 12th: "You certainly will not suspect me of any intention to injure your feelings or reputation. For the last three months I have done everything in my power to ward off the attacks which were made on you." The attacks to which Halleck refers became very virulent after the battle of Shiloh, when Grant was charged with drunkenness and general incompetence. Halleck's real opinion of Grant is revealed in a conversation he had with Colonel Robert Allen, a quartermaster in the army at Corinth, as related by Badeau. When Allen came to visit

Halleck at his tent just before the latter was to leave for Washington, Halleck said to him, "Now, what can I do for you?" Allen replied that he could think of nothing. To Allen's great astonishment, Halleck answered, "Yes, I can give you command of this army." When Allen protested, "I do not have rank," Halleck replied, "That can easily be obtained."<sup>1</sup>

Late in June of 1862, after McClellan's reverses in his campaign against Richmond, Salmon P. Chase, the Secretary of the Treasury, Gideon Welles, Secretary of the Navy, and General John Pope conferred with Lincoln one day at the War Department. As they examined the war maps spread on a table, Chase criticized the strategy of the campaign against Richmond and suggested that the army be recalled and sent against the city by the land route from Washington. "What would you do?" Lincoln inquired of Chase. "Order McClellan to return and start right," responded Chase. Then Pope, looking up from the maps, spoke: "If Halleck were here, you would have, Mr. President, a competent adviser who would put this matter right."

Early in the war, in the Summer of 1861, Secretary of the Treasury Chase complained to Scott of the vast expenses McClellan was incurring; Scott asked him to be patient until Halleck returned from California to relieve McClellan. This shows that Scott intended at that time to recommend that Halleck be named both to succeed him as general-in-chief and McClellan as commander of the Army of the Potomac. We do not know how many others recommended Halleck as the man for the hour to Lincoln. The administration and the country at large gave him considerable credit for the western victories achieved by Grant and Pope and Buell. According to Nicolay and Hay, it was about this time that Lincoln made a secret trip to West Point to confer with the aged General Scott, now in retirement. The only record of this conference available is

---

<sup>1</sup> Badeau, *Military History of U. S. Grant*, P. 108.

a memorandum from the hand of Scott giving Lincoln advice as to McClellan's campaign but making no mention of Halleck. It was shortly after this visit, however, that Lincoln summoned Halleck to Washington and entrusted him with the supreme command. As his courier, he sent Governor Sprague of Rhode Island with the message that he would like Halleck to come to Washington and take command if this could be done without endangering operations in the West. Halleck replied that his acceptance must mean that he would advise that all the forces in North Carolina, Virginia, and Washington be placed under one commander who could be held completely responsible. This evidently satisfied Lincoln, for on the 11th of July, 1862 he issued the order making Halleck general-in-chief of all land forces, a post which had been relinquished by McClellan in March, when he set forth on his Peninsula campaign against Richmond. James G. Blaine felt that Halleck's appointment was due to "increasing dissatisfaction in Congress and among the people with the supersedure of General Grant," and that Lincoln had called him to Washington to relieve this situation.

At this time, Halleck was forty-seven years of age, Grant was forty, Sherman forty-two, Lee fifty-five, and McClellan thirty-six. Halleck was five feet, nine inches tall, sturdy and erect. He is described as resembling an "oleaginous Methodist parson." The portraits show a large, heavy countenance, fringed with whiskers; the eyes are large and staring; the face wears a perplexed, half-dazed expression quite in keeping with his indecision as a military commander.

Halleck's first problem involved the disposition of McClellan's army, which he ordered to withdraw from the James River. The extent of Halleck's responsibility for this military blunder is not clear. The anti-McClellan men in the cabinet were determined to get McClellan out of the Peninsula; having yielded to that pressure, Halleck should have made certain that McClellan's forces were joined to Pope's army without delay. Instead, he allowed McClellan

to discuss and procrastinate until Lee fell upon the unfortunate Pope before he had achieved unity with the full force of the Army of the Potomac. Halleck revealed his complete incompetence and want of courage during those fateful days of the second battle of Manassas in the telegram he sent McClellan, whom he had hitherto ignored and snubbed: "I beg of you to assist me in this crisis with your ability and your experience. I am entirely tired out."

Early on the morning of September 2nd, when Pope's beaten army was streaming towards Washington, Halleck accompanied Lincoln to McClellan's home, where Lincoln directed McClellan to resume command of the forces around Washington; the orders were Lincoln's and not Halleck's. In this first crisis which confronted him, Halleck had failed dismally; yet, as we shall see, he survived this and many another failure. At a Cabinet meeting called to discuss a possible successor to McClellan after he had won the decisive Antietam battle, Attorney-General Bates suggested that Halleck take command of the army in person. "But," wrote Welles in his *Diary*, "the President said that all the Cabinet concurred in the opinion that Halleck would be an indifferent general in the field, that he shirked responsibility in his present position, that he, in short, is a moral coward, worth but little except as a critic and director of operations, though intelligent and educated."

Distressed by Burnside's failure at Fredericksburg, Lincoln wrote to Halleck to inform him of Burnside's plan to recross the Rappahannock; he requested him to confer with Burnside and then tell him "that you do or that you do not approve his plan. Your military skill is useless to me if you will not do this." Offended by this frankness, Halleck submitted his resignation, but Lincoln, his exasperation now subsided, soothed him and refused to accept it. The copy of the letter to Halleck bears the following endorsement in Lincoln's hand: "Withdrawn because considered harsh by General Halleck."

When Hooker succeeded Burnside as commander of the Army of the Potomac, he ignored Halleck by communi-



cating directly with Lincoln. One of Halleck's few wise acts as general-in-chief was his suggestion that General Meade be made commander of the army if Hooker were removed. After Chancellorsville, Halleck and Stanton conferred with Lincoln, who said: "We can't run Joe any more," and asked for suggestions for a replacement. Halleck named Meade and offered Sedgwick as a second choice. Lincoln then proposed that they cast a ballot which resulted in a vote of two to one for Meade.

Halleck did the country a great service in opposing Lincoln's plan to have McClernand assume full command of the expedition against Vicksburg. To his credit, it must also be remembered that Halleck supported Grant during the weary months of the siege of Vicksburg when so many complaints and attacks upon Grant poured in from all quarters. Grant himself later admitted: "With all the pressure brought to bear upon them, both President Lincoln and General Halleck stood by me to the end of the campaign."

Grant transported his army across the Mississippi below Vicksburg, relinquished Grand Gulf as a base, and started his campaign in the rear of Vicksburg to capture Jackson. He said he knew well that Halleck's caution would lead him to disapprove of this daring operation. In the battle of Black River Bridge in the midst of this operation, an officer from Banks' staff brought Grant a letter dated the 11th of May which had been sent by way of New Orleans to Banks to be forwarded to Grant. It contained Halleck's order for Grant to return to Grand Gulf, to co-operate from there with Banks against Fort Hudson, and to return with their combined forces to besiege Vicksburg. Grant told the bearer that the order had arrived too late and that Halleck would not give it then if he knew the position of the army. Banks's staff officer insisted that Grant obey the order; he was arguing in support of his position when Grant heard great cheering on the right of his battle line and turned to see General Lawler in his shirt sleeves leading a charge on the enemy. "I immediately mounted my horse," said Grant,

“and rode in the direction of the charge and saw no more of the officer who delivered the dispatch; I think not even to this day.”

After the great victory at Vicksburg, Grant suggested to Halleck that the army move against Mobile. Halleck disapproved the proposal and Grant was obliged to settle down again on the defensive, as Halleck had previously compelled him to do after the victories of Shiloh and Corinth. Grant renewed his request later in July and again in August, and requested a leave of absence to visit New Orleans, especially if his plan to proceed against Mobile should be approved. Halleck denied both requests. “So far as my experience with General Halleck went,” wrote Grant, “it was very much easier for him to refuse a favor than to grant one . . . The General-in-Chief having decided against me, the depletion of an army which had won a succession of great victories commenced, as had been the case the year before after the fall of Corinth, when the Army was sent where it would do the least good.”

When Grant came to Washington as general-in-chief, both Stanton and Halleck cautioned him not to discuss his campaign plans with Lincoln on the ground that the President was so kind-hearted, “so averse to refusing anything asked of him, that some friend would be sure to get from him all he knew.” Grant accepted this advice and revealed his plans to no one.

Halleck and Stanton displayed weakness in their management of the armed movements in the Shenandoah Valley, which was the principal storehouse for feeding Lee’s army. Grant claimed that this was due in part to the “incompetency” of some of the commanders, but chiefly to interference from Washington. “It seemed to be the policy of General Halleck and Secretary Stanton to keep any force sent there in pursuit of the invading army moving right and left so as to keep between the enemy and our capital; and generally speaking they pursued this policy until all knowledge of the whereabouts of the enemy was lost . . . I determined to put a stop to this.” Grant did so effectively

by assigning Sheridan the command of the Shenandoah Valley.

In the Fall of 1864 Halleck had written to Grant in great alarm about supposed conspiracies and combinations in the North designed to resist the draft. He thought it might require the withdrawal of a very considerable number of troops from the field: "Are not the appearances such that we ought to take in sail and prepare the ship for a storm?" Grant replied that the militia in the northern states should be organized to deal with any such uprising and that to draw troops from the field "to keep the loyal states in harness would make it well nigh impossible to suppress the rebellion in the disloyal states. My withdrawal now from the James would insure the defeat of Sherman. Instead of taking in sail, 20,000 men added to him at this time would destroy the greater part of Hood's army." It is very significant that, simultaneously with this dispatch, Grant proposed to Stanton that Halleck be sent to San Francisco to take a command on the Pacific Coast; he had evidently come to the conclusion that Halleck was altogether useless in Washington.

After Lee's surrender at Appomattox, Halleck was assigned to the command of the Military Division of the James, with headquarters at Richmond. Stanton had written to Halleck saying that it was not safe for Grant to stop at a hotel in Washington, and asked if it might be possible for him to make use of Halleck's Georgetown residence. Halleck at once wrote Grant inviting him to make use of the home and all its appointments. Grant accepted the invitation and for a number of months lived in Halleck's house. Had Grant known then, as he later did, of Halleck's correspondence with McClellan after the surrender of Fort Donelson, he probably would not have accepted Halleck's hospitality.

In August of 1865 Halleck was ordered to command the Military Division of the Pacific, with headquarters at San Francisco. That was a happy appointment for him, for it was there that he had won distinction and accumulated

wealth as a lawyer, author, and mine director. It had been Halleck's hope to spend the years of his retirement at a beautiful spot on the Peninsula south of San Francisco and overlooking the Pacific. In 1869 he was transferred to command the Division of the South, with headquarters at St. Louis. There he died January 9th, 1872, in the arms of his West Point roommate and brother-in-law, Schuyler Hamilton.

In the Summer of 1862, when Halleck was called to Washington, he stood high in the estimate of men like General Scott and General Sherman. He was perhaps the most eminent and, in worldly matters, the most successful of all the officers in the old army when he renounced his lucrative law practice in San Francisco and proffered his services to the government. In the popular mind he was given much of the credit for the victories of the western armies under Grant and Pope. It was, therefore, not strange that Lincoln should choose Halleck to succeed McClellan as general-in-chief of all the armies. The strange thing was that he kept him in that high post for a year and a half despite the fact that he quickly demonstrated his total unfitness. When Grant was appointed lieutenant-general and commander of all the armies, Lincoln and Stanton gave Halleck the post of military adviser and chief of staff, for which there was then no warrant in law. Halleck must have possessed qualities other than indecision and stupidity. Perhaps Lincoln found that he was a useful man to have about, and that he could talk freely with him about the armies and their operations and their commanders, for Halleck gathered no clique about him and doubtless was able to furnish some useful information. Perhaps, too, he was a good listener to Lincoln's stories.

Halleck's soldiers in the West gave him the soubriquet, "Old Brains," partly because they had heard about his various books, but probably chiefly because of his unusually large head. He was a curious contradiction; a man of great erudition and brain power, but at the same time dull and obtuse in military understanding and direction. McClellan

called him the "most hopelessly stupid" of all the men he had encountered in high position. Originating nothing, afraid to decide or take responsibility in time of danger and crisis, unable to use the powerful weapon Lincoln had placed in his hands when he made him the supreme commander, and then reduced to the status of a military clerk, Halleck is a tragic figure. Chosen by and maintained in power by Lincoln, he injured the cause of the North more deeply than any other high officer. "Good for nothing," as the Secretary of the Treasury Chase put it, "and everybody knew it but Lincoln."

General Sherman, who had known Halleck so well and so long and who originally had visualized him as the future commander of the Union armies, thus summed up his final estimate:

"As to General Halleck, I had in him the most unbounded confidence in 1862. He was the best informed scholar of the military art in America, McClellan not excepted. I knew him familiarly at West Point for three years, sailed with him around Cape Horn in 1864 on board *The Lexington*; was associated with him in California for the four years of the Mexican War, and knew him for another six years when he was a member of the eminent law firm of Halleck, Peachy, Billings. But war is a terrible test. Halleck did not stand the test; whereas Grant did. Halleck was a theoretical soldier; Grant was a practical soldier."

1846

# 9

## Grant and Butler

**T**he darkest shadow on the military and personal history of General Grant is that cast by his relationship with Benjamin F. Butler, one of the most extraordinary men in the long history of democracies from the time of Athens to the present. During the Civil War period and for twenty years thereafter no man was more discussed by the public and the press, and no man was ever so ridiculed, execrated, hated, and scorned. The rabble of New Orleans screamed its rage against him; Jefferson Davis outlawed him; and the Confederate General Beauregard gave him his sobriquet, "Butler the Beast." When he was elected Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in 1882, Harvard University broke a hitherto inviolable tradition by not bestowing upon him the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws. Massachusetts' high-minded Senator, George F. Hoar, one of Butler's antagonists, wrote of him:

"In the presence of the Great Reconciler, Death, ordinary human contentions and anger should be hushed. But if there be such a thing in the universe as a moral law, if the distinction between right and wrong be other than a phantasy or a dream, the difference between General Butler and the men who contended with him belongs not to this life alone. It relates to matters more permanent than human life. It enters into the fate of republics and will endure after the fashion of this world passeth away."

This extraordinary man, denounced alike by the canaille of the New Orleans streets and by the prophet-like sentences of the Massachusetts senator, held high posts in the nation and in his state. He was the friend of Lincoln, whose heart he had cheered by his early arrival with his brigade of Massachusetts Volunteers at Washington when the fate of the republic seemed to hang in the balance, and when Lincoln, looking sadly across the Potomac at the Confederate flag waving on the top of the Marshall house at Alexandria, wondered "if there was any North after all." It was this same Butler to whom Lincoln offered Grant's command in the Mississippi Valley in 1862. In the national election of 1864, when New York feared an insurrection, the government turned to Butler and entrusted him with the task of maintaining peace. It was Butler whom Lincoln desired as a running mate on the Republican ticket in the campaign of 1864. It was Butler who was suggested by some northern leaders as a good dictator for the nation in its crisis, and who was occasionally mentioned for the Presidential nomination in 1864. It was this same Butler who exerted some mysterious power over Grant during and after the war and who, as a member of Congress during his administration, boasted that few men possessed as great a share of the President's confidence or had more personal influence with him in public questions. Grant, over whose relationship with Butler there hangs a cloud of mystery, said of him long after their association in the Civil War: "Butler is a man it is a fashion to abuse, but he is a man who has done the country a great service and who is worthy of its gratitude."

Butler was as odd in personal appearance as he was extraordinary in his political and military history. Colonel Theodore Lyman, one of Meade's staff, thus sketches him for us:

"He is the strangest sight on a horse you ever saw. It is hard to keep your eyes off him. With his head set immediately on a stout, shapeless body, his very squinting eyes, and a set of legs and arms which make him look as

if made for somebody else and hastily glued to him by mistake, he presents a combination of Victor Emmanuel, Aesop and Richard III, which is very confusing to the mind."

Butler was a happy and clever creator of phrases. As commander of Fortress Monroe in the first year of the war, he refused the demand of Virginia slaveholders that he return to them the great numbers of fugitive slaves who escaped to his lines. He gave as the ground of his refusal the argument that the Negroes were used as laborers by the Confederate authorities in the camps and in building fortifications and were therefore "contraband of war." This represented not only the employment of a happy phrase but the adoption of a shrewd and clever policy. Butler was the author of another famous expression. During the Virginia campaign General Grant, in his headquarters at City Point, wrote a letter to Elihu Washburne to express the belief that the end of the war could not be far off and that the Confederates "have robbed the cradle and the grave equally to get their present force." Some time previously, Grant had discussed with Butler the future of the war. Butler had remarked that, unless the Confederates armed the slaves, they would have great difficulty in obtaining sufficient men for their armies, for they were "robbing both the cradle and the grave." This striking phrase appealed to Grant and he made use of it in a letter to Washburne.

Benjamin F. Butler was born at Deerfield, New Hampshire in 1818, the product of a long line of God-fearing New Englanders. His mother made application to Massachusetts and New Hampshire congressmen to secure him the appointment to West Point which he so ardently desired. However, when she consulted her pastor, a Baptist minister, he strongly advised against sending young Butler to West Point on the ground that he was religiously inclined, that his religious feelings and principles would be derided, and that he might possibly become a freethinker. This argument settled the matter and Butler was sent to the Baptist College at Waterville, now Colby College. Butler subsequently



regretted his failure to attend West Point, saying he would have defended his faith had anyone attempted to belittle his mother's religion, "and very possibly would have been one of the very few religious gentlemen to have come from West Point, like General O. O. Howard."

Butler established himself as a clever, successful, and browbeating lawyer at Lowell, Massachusetts, where his ready wit and rough invective made him feared by his colleagues. He espoused the cause of the factory workers who were striving to secure a ten-hour law; when some of the factories posted a notice warning employees that a vote for the law would result in discharge, Butler answered that if a single worker were laid off, he would assume the leadership in converting Lowell into a sheep pasture and a fishing place, and would begin by applying the torch to his own house.<sup>1</sup>

Butler was a delegate to the Democratic National Convention of 1860 which met in Charleston, South Carolina. Instructed to vote for Douglas, he distinguished himself by voting for Jefferson Davis fifty-seven times. When armed secession appeared imminent, he immediately made his position clear. When members of the National Committee of the Breckenridge Wing of the Democratic Party informed him that the southern states planned to secede and expressed the belief that Massachusetts could not resist secession because such a policy would be opposed by thousands of her own citizens, Butler replied: "No, sir; when we come from Massachusetts on this errand, we shall not leave a single traitor behind unless he is hanging on a tree."

"Well, we shall see."

"You will see. I know something of the North and a good deal about New England, where I was born and have lived for forty-two years . . . Let me tell you, as sure as you attempt to destroy this Union, the North will resist the

---

<sup>1</sup>At the time of the trial of the Chicago anarchists for the Haymarket murders in 1886, Butler proffered his services free of charge as counsel for the anarchists. "God made me," he said of himself, "only one way. I must be always with the under dog in the fight."

attempt to the last man and its last dollar . . . From the moment your first gun is fired on the American flag, your slaves will not be worth five years' purchase. But as to breaking up the Union, it cannot be done. God and nature and the blood of your fathers and mine have made it one, and one country it must and shall remain."

Butler's brigade of Massachusetts militia was the first to reach Washington after the flag had been fired on at Fort Sumter. The Baltimore mob's attack on the Sixth Regiment of this brigade as it passed through that city resulted in the first casualty of the war and greatly stirred the North. When Butler's troops arrived in Washington, Lincoln came to the depot to greet them; taking Colonel Jones of the Sixth Regiment warmly by the hand he exclaimed: "Thank God you have come! For if you had not, Washington would have been in the hands of the rebels before morning."

In March of 1862, after Farragut's fleet had captured the forts below New Orleans, Butler landed at the city in command of the army of occupation. His administration, as even his enemies admitted, was vigorous, altogether fearless and, although ruthless, was in many ways beneficial to the city. Order was preserved, the streets were cleaned, and yellow fever was banished. Two of Butler's administrative acts brought him great notoriety and execration. One was the execution of Mumford who, before Butler's arrival at New Orleans, hauled down the flag which Farragut had hoisted over the United States Mint, trailed it through the streets, tore it in pieces, and distributed to the mob the fragments, wearing one piece himself in the buttonhole of his coat. When Butler heard of this profanation, he said to one of his officers, "I will hang that fellow whenever I catch him." In due time Mumford was apprehended, convicted, and sentenced to death. Despite the threats which poured in upon him, the pleas of notable citizens who warned that Mumford's execution would loose the fury of the populace, and the tears of Mumford's pleading wife and children, Butler carried out the sentence. Imitating the Spanish custom which punishes a criminal as near as possible to the scene of the crime, he

had Mumford hanged in front of the Mint from which he had torn the nation's flag. It was on the ground of this action that, on December 23rd, 1862, Jefferson Davis pronounced and declared "the said Benjamin F. Butler to be a felon, deserving of capital punishment. I do order that he shall no longer be considered nor treated simply as a public enemy of the Confederate States of America, but as an outlaw and common enemy of mankind, and that in the event of his capture the officer in command of the capturing force shall cause him to be immediately executed by hanging." This foolish edict served only to give Butler heroic stature in the North. Butler's famous "Woman Order," issued at New Orleans, was another act which aroused the fury of the South. Two well-dressed and aristocratic ladies had spat upon two Massachusetts soldiers on their way to church on a Sabbath morning. Butler immediately issued a decree that henceforth any woman who insulted a soldier of the United States in uniform was to be treated as a "woman of the street plying her trade." This order was, of course, immediately effective, for no lady of New Orleans dared to court such a stigma; thereafter United States soldiers were no longer subjected to public insult.

On November 9th, 1862 Butler was relieved of the command of the Department of the Gulf and was succeeded by Major-General Nathaniel T. Banks. On his way north he was received with great acclaim by the citizens of Philadelphia, New York, and Boston, and everywhere was hailed as a hero. He spoke in Faneuil Hall and was entertained at a public dinner in Boston. In his honor, Oliver Wendell Holmes read a poem two lines of which ran as follows:

"The mower mows on, though the adder may rise,  
And the copperhead curl around the blade of the scythe."

This couplet by the New England laureate and essayist truly summarized the situation. Butler's administration at New Orleans had angered and infuriated the Union's enemies in the South and the Copperheads in the North, but these same acts cheered the hearts of thousands of the Union's de-

fenders. An editorial in *The Richmond Examiner* expressed the South's sentiments toward Butler in stating that he had

“violated the laws of God and man. The lawmakers of the United States voted him thanks, and the preachers of the Yankee Gospel of God came to him and worshipped him. He had insulted women. Things in female attire lavished harlots' smiles upon him. He was a murderer, and a nation of assassins had deified him. . . . Benjamin Butler, the beastliest, bloodiest paltroon and pickpocket the world ever saw.”

After his recall, Butler called upon Lincoln who suggested that he travel down the Mississippi Valley with an independent command to organize Negro regiments. Butler demurred, saying that if he accepted such a post after having been relieved by Banks at New Orleans, it would seem to the country that he was unfit to command troops in the field and was equipped only to act as a “recruiting sergeant.” To this Lincoln answered: “There is something in that, but I will give you a command. You may take Grant's command down there.” Butler replied that he had been disappointed in being replaced without reason; that Grant would doubtless experience the same reaction; that he had watched Grant's movements with care, saw no reason for his recall, and that he did not wish to be a party to another such injustice as he himself had suffered.<sup>1</sup>

In 1864 Butler was appointed commissioner for the exchange of prisoners and thereafter met Grant for the first time. The Confederacy's notorious prison stockade was located at Andersonville, Georgia, where 8,589 federal prisoners died in the short period between June and September of 1864; this was almost three times the number of Union soldiers killed in the three-day battle of Gettysburg. Here the Daughters of the Confederacy have erected a monument to the memory of Captain Henry Wirz, the camp's commanding officer. At the conclusion of hostilities, Wirz was seized by the United States government, tried, and hanged; he

---

<sup>1</sup> *Butler's Book*, p. 550.

was the only "war criminal" of any prominence executed after the war. On the monument to Wirz are engraved these words quoted from a letter Grant wrote to Butler on August 18th, 1864: "It is hard on our men held in Southern prisons not to exchange them; but it is humanity to those left in the ranks to fight our battles. At this particular time, to release all rebel prisoners would insure Sherman's defeat and would compromise our safety here." The clear inference is that, had Grant consented to a full and free exchange of prisoners, there would have been no tragedy of horrors enacted within the wall of the dread Andersonville stockade.

The Confederacy was willing to exchange prisoners, but made an exception in the case of colored soldiers, whom it abominated. Butler proposed to Stanton that the exchange proceed until the North had regained all its prisoners; when that had been accomplished, it would still hold a surplus of about ten thousand Confederate prisoners who could be held as hostages for the few hundred colored soldiers held by the Confederates. Butler planned to retaliate upon this surplus of Confederate prisoners for any outrages perpetrated upon Union troops, white or black. He was confident that the Confederate authorities could not withstand the pressure exerted by the relatives of their prisoners if the South refused to make the exchange on those lines.

When this proposal was made to the Confederate authorities, they replied that Butler and all officers of the North who commanded Negro troops had been outlawed by Jefferson Davis' proclamation, and that they could not treat with him as an agent of exchange. The federal government promptly returned the communication, stating that it did not recognize the right of the Confederate authorities to outlaw its officers. The Virginia legislature thereupon passed a resolution calling on Davis to reverse the edict of outlawry and recognize Butler as the exchange commissioner. In March of 1864, the Confederates sent Robert Ould as their agent of exchange to Butler, thus tacitly withdrawing the proclamation of outlawry.

Butler was still discussing with his own government and

with the Confederates the question of the colored prisoners when General Grant, now commander of all the armies, came to visit him at Fortress Monroe on April 1st, 1864. On this occasion Grant ordered Butler not to exchange another able-bodied Confederate prisoner until further notice, and outlined his views on the subject. The Confederate prisoners were returned in good condition and immediately re-entered the ranks; most of the Union prisoners received in exchange were disabled and unfit men, and by the regulations were at once given a three months' furlough and allowed to return home. Many failed to recover and comparatively few returned to the federal armies. Grant told Butler that the campaign which was about to open on every front would be decided by the comparative strength of the opposing forces and that he was determined that Lee should not receive reinforcements of returned Confederate prisoners. The North held twenty-six thousand such captives; if exchanged, they would constitute a corps of veteran soldiers larger than any in Lee's army at that time. Grant regretted the sufferings of the federal prisoners, but believed that a refusal to exchange would, in the end, weaken the Confederacy and shorten the war. Grant also believed that a cessation of exchange would remove the temptation to some soldiers in the federal armies to surrender themselves as prisoners, escape the perils of the campaign, and then be exchanged and go home; if these men ever re-entered the army, it would be only by the inducement of a still larger bounty. As Grant calculated, one Union prisoner held by the Confederates was the equivalent of at least three soldiers in their ranks.

Butler, as a rule so unsparing in his denunciation of the Confederacy and all its works, thought that neither the people of the South nor the higher officers of their government were in any great degree responsible for the hardships suffered by the Union prisoners held in their prison camps. He had examined the haversacks of the Confederate soldiers captured by his army and found in them three days' rations, amounting only to a pint of corn kernels, parched to blackness by fire, and a three-inch piece of meat, generally raw

bacon. If this was all the enemy could furnish its own soldiers, it was to be expected that its prisoners must suffer privation.

In January of 1865 the Confederate authorities offered to exchange prisoners man for man, white or black. Grant accepted the proposal which he had previously declined, for he foresaw the end of the war. Examining in retrospect the course of military events, considering the number of men Grant then had in his armies, and recalling how straitened were the resources of the Confederacy, one is not impressed with Grant's reasoning that the addition to the Confederate ranks of all his prisoners would have had any appreciable effect upon the course of the war.

In planning the grand campaign against the Confederacy in the Spring of 1864, Grant assigned Butler's Army of the James the task of moving out from Fortress Monroe, establishing itself on the south side of the James River and thence advancing on Richmond from the southeast while Grant with the Army of the Potomac came down from the north. The plan was excellent in every respect, but failed to take into account the character and military incompetence of the commander of the Army of the James. Grant was not responsible for the fact that Butler was its commander, and he was well aware of the low opinion in which his military ability was held by army officers. The fact that he left Butler in command of the Army of the James and entrusted him with so important a part of the campaign shows that Grant was not altogether a free agent, although the government had ostensibly given him complete control.

Grant sought to overcome the handicap posed by Butler's command by appointing two very able and experienced professional soldiers to serve under him: General Q. A. Gillmore to the Tenth Corps and General W. F. Smith to the Eighteenth Corps. It was Grant's first plan to put Smith in command of all the troops in the field in Butler's department, but this was later "fatally modified" by permitting Butler to take the field in person. Had Butler been less arrogant and conceited and willing to be guided by the experienced

generals under him, especially the brilliant W. F. Smith, the action might have eventuated differently. At it turned out, Butler's campaign was a pitiful fiasco.

Butler embarked his large force at Fortress Monroe and steamed up Chesapeake Bay and the York River, as if he intended to land in the rear of Lee's army. At midnight the transports were turned about and at daybreak were far up the James River, where Butler established himself at Bermuda Hundred on the south bank of the river. So far, the maneuver was successful, but disaster was about to strike. Butler advanced up the James as far as Drury's Bluff, half way between Bermuda Hundred and Richmond. There on the 16th of May he was attacked by General Beauregard, whose forces had been brought up from the South, and driven back with heavy losses into his entrenchments at Bermuda Hundred. Grant said that this defeat was such as "to limit very materially the further usefulness of the Army of the James as a distinct factor in the campaign."

Butler's fortified position between the James and Appomattox rivers was one of great strength. His right flank was protected by the James, his left by the Appomattox, and his rear by the confluence of the two rivers. Although a strong defensive one, Butler's position was such that his army could not take the offensive because the Confederates had entrenched themselves in front of him across the same neck of land. General Barnard, sent down to report on the state of affairs in Butler's army, told Grant that the position resembled a bottle with Butler's entrenchments representing the cork. Neither side could imperil the other, but a small Confederate force could hold Butler in his entrenchments and, so to speak, cork him up in the bottle. Grant used this expression of Barnard's in his *General Report* on the campaign of 1864-1865, much to the humiliation and annoyance of Butler, who was afterwards sometimes derisively referred to as "Bottled-up Butler." Grant had not meant to ridicule him, and in his *Memoirs* goes out of his way to apologize.

Butler quarreled constantly with his two corps commanders. He succeeded in having Gillmore relieved; but in



consequence of his dispute with General Smith, Grant obtained an order from the War Department placing Smith at the head of all the troops in Butler's department. This immured Butler in his headquarters at Fortress Monroe and in effect relieved him of his command. Two days later Butler called on Grant, who thereupon revoked the orders; restoring Butler to full command, he sent Smith off to New York to await assignment.

In November of 1864 Butler gave Grant and Meade and members of their staffs an exhibition of Greek fire, pouring it through a hose and igniting a steam. Theodore Lyman, one of Meade's staff, said that Butler had a fire engine "wherewith he proposes to squirt on earthworks and wash them all down." "Certainly," said Meade, "your engine fires only thirty feet, and a minnie rifle three thousand yards, and I am afraid your men might be killed before they had a chance to burn up their adversaries." This incident demonstrates that Butler was in some things far ahead of his time; today no one laughs at the idea of liquid fire, and a flame thrower has become one of the most effective and dreaded of modern military weapons. Lyman also relates that Butler "was going to get a gun that shoots seven miles, and, taking direction by compass, burn the city of Richmond with shells of Greek fire." Here again Butler prophesied the weapons used in World War II to destroy cities with incendiary bombs.

Wilmington, North Carolina, was the last of the ports used by blockade-runners carrying supplies to the Confederacy; the reduction of Fort Fisher, commanding the entrance to Wilmington, was therefore an objective of the greatest importance. Toward the end of October of 1864, Butler conceived the idea that Fort Fisher could be breached by a gunpowder explosion and that thereafter the troops could easily take possession of the works. He had heard that the explosion of powder magazines at Erith on the Thames had blasted houses within a wide radius and broken window panes fifty miles away in the suburbs of London. When Lincoln sent him to New York to keep order at the Novem-

ber elections, a task for which he was eminently fitted, Butler stopped over in Washington and made his proposal to Gustavus Fox, the Assistant Secretary of the Navy. Butler thought that a boat loaded with three hundred tons of powder, if exploded close to the fort, would make a breach in the walls through which the troops could enter. Both Fox and Admiral Porter gave their support to the proposition, but army engineers reported adversely to a council of Army and Navy officers. General Richard Delafield presented a summary of past powder explosions to demonstrate that Butler's plan was not practicable. Despite the opinion of the experts, the council of officers voted to try the plan.

Grant finally consented to the experiment despite expressed misgivings:

"Whether the report will be sufficient even to wake up the garrison in the fort, if they happen to be asleep at the time of the explosion, I do not know. It is at least foolish to think that the effect of the explosion could be transmitted to such a distance with enough force to weaken the fort. However, they can use an old boat which is not of much value, and we have plenty of damaged powder which is unserviceable for any other purpose, so that the experiment will not cost much, at any rate."

Lincoln coupled his consent with the facetious remark: "We might as well explode the notion with powder as anything else."

The old steamer *Louisiana*, worth about a thousand dollars, was obtained at Newbern, North Carolina; an expert of the Ordnance Bureau loaded it with the powder to which a Gomer fuse was attached. When Porter visited *The Louisiana*, he saw the fuse, "like a huge tapeworm, working its way through the powder bags." In the cabin of the boat a clock was set to fire the fuse at the desired time. A little skeptical of the effectiveness of this device, Porter ordered half a cord of pine knots piled up in the cabin to be ignited by the last man who left the ship. It was these pine knots, and not the clock device, which finally exploded the powder.

Grant originally planned to have General George Weit-

zel, a capable young officer of the Regular Army, lead the approximately six thousand troops which were to be employed in the expedition against Fort Fisher. However, when sailing time arrived, Butler decided to accompany the expedition himself; unwilling to displease him, Grant permitted him to take a command. Porter's enthusiasm had inspired in Grant some degree of hope, but when he returned to his headquarters at City Point after visiting Butler at Hampton Roads, he wrote Butler to dispatch General Weitzel, accompanied by Porter, with the attacking force, with or without the powder boat.

On December 8th the troops were loaded on the transports, but an untimely southwest wind brought a storm which delayed the sailing for five days. Porter had had an unhappy experience with Butler at New Orleans, and when he learned that Butler was to command in person, he communicated to Fox at the Navy Department his fears that the expedition would prove a failure. With this feeling existing between the commanders of the expedition, the transports sailed from Bermuda Hundred on December 12th; on the 18th the powder ship, *The Louisiana*, joined the blockading fleet assembled out of sight of land, twenty miles off Fort Fisher.

Butler arrived at Beaufort on the 16th of December. On the morning of the 23rd Porter sent a fast ship to inform Butler that he would explode the powder boat at 2 o'clock the next morning. The captain of the powder ship carried the vessel under her own steam to within two hundred yards of the northeast salient of Fort Fisher, where he anchored, set the clock works, and fired the pine knots. He and his men then boarded a tug and ran twelve miles out to sea. The time set for the explosion by the clockwork device arrived, but nothing happened. Then at 1:40 A.M., twenty-two minutes after the time set, a column of flame shot up from the *Louisiana*, accompanied by a few light reports which cracked a few panes of glass on Porter's ships. The Confederate look-outs on Fort Fisher thought that a boiler had exploded on one of the Union ships. Instead of producing an instantan-

eous and gigantic explosion, the evidently faulty powder had burned like a Roman candle.

At daylight Porter, expecting Butler to appear with his transports, moved in to bombard the fort; Butler did not appear until the following day, which was Christmas, when some of the troops were landed. General Weitzel reconnoitered the face of Fort Fisher and reported that only two of the nineteen Confederate guns bearing on the land approach had been dismounted by the naval bombardment. Grant had given instructions that, as soon as the troops landed, they were to entrench and lay siege to the fort. Butler despaired of making a successful assault; disregarding Grant's orders, he re-embarked his troops and returned to Hampton Roads. Grant was greatly annoyed by the Fort Fisher fiasco, and telegraphed Lincoln on December 28th: "The Wilmington Expedition has proven a gross and culpable failure . . . Who is to blame, will, I hope, be known."

The enraged Porter wrote to Grant, "Send me the same soldiers with another general, and we will have the fort." Grant replied, sympathizing with Porter in his disappointment, and agreed to honor the request. The new commander was the capable General A. H. Terry, who opened his orders when his transports had put out to sea. On the 13th of January, working in harmony with Porter, Terry landed his troops in front of Fort Fisher; on the 15th, after a desperate encounter with the Confederate defenders, the stronghold fell. A few days before the surrender of the fort, Grant had fortified his resolution to the point of asking the Secretary of War to relieve Butler of his command. As a ground for this action he stated that, during his own absences Butler, who ranked all the other officers, was in command, and that it was the general opinion that this was unwise and unsafe.

On January 8th, seven days before the fall of Fort Fisher, General Horace Porter and Colonel Babcock of Grant's staff visited Butler's headquarters to deliver the written order relieving him from command. Butler read the order, and then said to the two officers, "Please say to Gen-

eral Grant that I will go to his headquarters and would like to have a personal interview with him." An interview had been effective at the time Grant relieved Butler of command of the field troops in his department and placed them under General W. F. Smith, for it had convinced Grant to reverse himself and countermand the order. On this occasion the outcome was not so felicitous; Butler returned to his home in Lowell to await orders from the War Department.

In a bombastic farewell address to his Army of the James, Butler took a fling at Grant when he said: "I have been chary of the precious charge confided to me. I have refused to order the useless sacrifice of the lives of such soldiers, and I am relieved from your command. The wasted blood of my men does not stain my garment. For my action I am responsible to God and my country." Grant took great offense at this farewell address; when it was rumored that Lincoln might appoint Butler as provost marshal of Charleston, South Carolina, he wrote to Stanton protesting the appointment. Grant contended that Butler should not again be placed on duty anywhere, first, because of his farewell address to the Army of the James, and second, because of a speech at Lowell. This action was in keeping with Grant's character. He was slow to wrath, and too tolerant of some of his subordinates; when once he had dismissed an officer, however, he never gave him another assignment.

Admiral Porter, who had had such a happy relationship with Grant in the Vicksburg campaign, was so displeased over the fiasco of the first attack on Fort Fisher that he wrote a confidential letter to the Secretary of the Navy, Gideon Welles, bitterly blaming Grant for sending Butler on the first expedition. Six years later, when Admiral Farragut died, Grant as President commissioned Porter Admiral of the Navy to succeed him. When the appointment came up for review in the Senate, Porter's enemies vigorously opposed its confirmation. On December 2nd, 1870, *The New York Sun* and *The World* published the Porter-Welles letter which Porter's enemies uncovered in the files of the Navy Department. Porter made every effort to appease Grant,

telling him that he had written the letter when he was under a false impression and pointing to their friendly relationship of many years as the index to his real opinion. Grant generously refused to withdraw Porter's nomination; by a vote of 31 to 10 Porter, then acting admiral, was confirmed as Admiral of the Navy. The fact that Grant did not withdraw the nomination is striking proof of his magnanimity.

Butler claimed that Grant had not wished him to accompany the expedition to Fort Fisher for fear that he might act creditably, and that when he had finally consented, he was glad to use the expedition's failure as a pretext for demanding Butler's relief. Butler charged Grant with jealousy because he had been mentioned for the Presidency at a meeting of his friends at the Fifth Avenue Hotel in New York. This fact, Butler claimed, was impressed upon Grant's mind by members of his staff in such a way as to cast him in the role of a possible rival. Butler claimed that this had such an effect upon Grant's mind that "from that hour until after he was President no kindly word of friendship ever passed from his lips to my ear." Butler says he was willing to forgive Grant "because he was misled and deceived by others, moved by feeling of political jealousy, which I know is impressed upon him by members of his staff." The pressure for his removal, according to Butler, came from his West Point staff officers, who in every way were trying to vilify and abuse him; and when Grant finally yielded to their machinations it was "only under that pressure of ambition for the highest office which has caused so many next in position to murder their chief to attain his place. Such effects of overweening ambition are strung along as guideposts through the whole history of the governments of the world."

Butler's part in the Fort Fisher fiasco gave Grant the courage to carry out an action long contemplated and too long delayed. It is hardly possible to believe Butler's declaration, that Grant was moved by jealousy. The plain fact is that Grant feared Butler, his political influence, and his skill as intriguer. The knowledge Butler had of personal and derogatory facts in his life induced Grant to hesitate to

demand dismissal until the country's ridicule of Butler after Fort Fisher imbued him with sufficient resolution.

Butler believed that his decision to withdraw his troops after he had landed at Fort Fisher, and thus face inevitable calumny, was the "best and bravest act of my life." Unperturbed by what he called "the delightful stream of obloquy" which was pouring in upon him, Butler appeared before the formidable Committee on the Conduct of the War, which heard not only his testimony, but that of Grant, Porter, and Weitzel.

By unanimous verdict the committee exonerated Butler of all blame, saying that his determination not to assault Fort Fisher was fully justified by all the facts and circumstances then known. Ben Wade, the committee chairman, later told General Sherman that Butler had just demonstrated to the committee's satisfaction that troops alone could not successfully assault Fort Fisher when there echoed in the corridors a newsboy's shrill voice, shouting, "Extra!" Wade called the boy into the meeting chamber and asked him what he was shouting about. Whereupon the boy answered, "Fort Fisher done took!" "Everyone laughed," said Wade, "and none more than Butler."

After his dismissal from the Army of the James, Butler was very bitter toward Grant. He commenced a book on Grant's military career with the contemplated assistance of James Parton, the popular biographer. The book was never finished and never published because of Butler's feeling that Grant's current popularity would make it impossible for his charges to achieve a hearing. In 1866 Grant sent Butler a late invitation to attend a reception at his home. Butler returned this answer: "General Butler has the honor to acknowledge the invitation of Lieutenant-General Grant. General Butler has no desire for further acquaintance."

As Grant's campaign for the Presidency opened in 1868, Butler remarked to one of his friends that "the election would show if there was any difference between a drunken tailor [Johnson] and a drunken tanner."<sup>1</sup> When it seemed

<sup>1</sup> George Gordon to Washburne, Aug. 27, 1866; see Washburne manuscript.

fairly certain that Grant would be nominated and elected, Butler, out of regard for his own congressional campaign, climbed aboard Grant's bandwagon and openly supported him. Reproached by a friend for leaving the Democratic party, Butler answered: "You say I have followed strange gods since leaving the Democratic party. Very likely so; but that party, since I left it, has not followed any god at all, but has gone straight to the devil!"

A mutual friend, George Wilkes, editor of the radical *Spirit of the Times* and associated with Butler in a Lower California enterprise, obtained from Grant a statement to the effect that the "bottled up" phrase which he had used in his official report was not meant to be derogatory, but was merely quoted from a statement by General Barnard. Through Wilkes, Butler received a further explanation from Grant to the effect that the invitation to the reception had been sent at so late an hour because he had not known until the last moment that General Butler was in town. Butler thereupon dispatched a note withdrawing his rude reply to Grant's invitation and said he was satisfied with his explanation of the "bottled up" incident; however, he suggested to Wilkes that Grant explain other matters in which he felt that he had been done an injustice. After some delay Grant wrote Wilkes that he would accept Butler's withdrawal of his rude answer to the invitation, but declined to enter upon further discussion of other matters relating to Butler in his *Report*.

When Butler campaigned for Congress in 1868, he faced the opposition of two officers with whom he had had unpleasant relationships. One was General G. H. Gordon, the other was General Judson Kilpatrick, the famous "Little Kill," Sherman's cavalry leader in the Georgia campaign who boasted that he had changed the name of a Georgia town from Barnwell to "Burnwell." Kilpatrick waged his campaign with the dash and spirit which had characterized his cavalry raids. He challenged Butler to secure a word of endorsement for his campaign from Grant, Washburne, Rawlins, Garfield, Blaine, or Sumner, and declared that



Butler had spread reports at Washington that Grant was a drunkard. Kilpatrick's attack had the secret support of Grant's friends; Grant himself doubtless hoped for Butler's defeat. At Galena, Grant's Illinois home, General Rawlins had assured Kilpatrick's representatives that Grant approved of the attack on Butler. According to Merrill, Grant informed W. W. Lander that he regarded Butler as an enemy, that he had intended to disgrace him when he relieved him of his command, and would have done so long before but for the quarrel which involved Franklin, "Baldy" Smith, and Butler.

When Grant became President, he and Butler had a long and apparently satisfactory conference to review all their past relationships. One occurrence which inclined Grant to friendliness was Butler's disclosure of a blackmail attempt. On April 1st, 1868, a San Francisco woman, Mrs. Mary B. Cox, wrote to Butler asking him to serve as her attorney in collecting one thousand dollars which she claimed was due her from Grant. In the letter she made the threat that "much scandal may be the result of the manner in which he is treating me." Butler sent the letter to Grant with the notation, "It would seem to be some attempt to blackmail, which follows gentlemen of position."

According to "Baldy" Smith, some time before Grant made his peace with Butler, General H. V. Boynton<sup>1</sup> came into possession of the document in which Butler had attacked Grant with all the venom of which he was capable. Boynton was about to release this through the Associated Press when he received directions to withhold it. Boynton understood

---

<sup>1</sup> General Boynton was the Washington correspondent of *The Cincinnati Gazette*, and served under Buell and Thomas. When Sherman's *Memoirs* appeared in 1876, Boynton published a book entitled *Sherman's Historical Raid* in which he attacked Sherman as "intensely egotistical, unreliable and cruelly unjust to nearly all of his distinguished associates." Some years later, Sherman told the reporter for a Cleveland newspaper that Boynton would "slander his own mother for a thousand dollars." Boynton threatened to sue for libel and asked Sherman if he had been correctly quoted. Sherman replied: "This is a hard thing to say of any man, but I believe it of you."

that a treaty of peace had been effected between Butler and Grant who, as part of the bargain, had placed all Massachusetts patronage in Butler's hands. In the next session of Congress, H. L. Dawes of Massachusetts, chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, attacked Grant for his White House expenses; Butler immediately appeared as Grant's champion. "Baldy" Smith, who had had such bitter quarrels with Butler, relates that shortly thereafter he met Butler on a horsecar in New York City and said to him: "General, there is one act in your political record that I do not understand." "What is that, sir?" Butler said sharply. "I refer," said Smith, "to your defense of the administration when attacked by Mr. Dawes." "Don't you know, sir," said Butler, "that I have always been a criminal lawyer?"

As to the influence which Butler had over Grant and which he employed to accomplish his ends, the distinguished Senator Hoar of Massachusetts wrote:

"I do not suppose that the secret of the hold which General Butler had upon General Grant will ever be disclosed. Butler boasted in the lobby of the House of Representatives that Grant would not dare to refuse any request of his, because he had in his possession affidavits by which he could prove that Grant had been drunk on seven different occasions. This statement was repeated to Grant by a member of the House who told me of the conversation. Grant replied, without manifesting any indignation or disbelief in the story, 'I have refused his request several times.' In the case of almost any other person than President Grant such an answer would have been a confession of the charge. But it ought not to be so taken in his case."

It was by only a narrow margin that Butler missed becoming President of the United States. In March of 1864 Lincoln sent Simon Cameron, a former Secretary of War, to visit Butler, then at Fortress Monroe in command of the Army of the James. Cameron informed Butler that Hannibal Hamlin, the Vice-President, would probably not be a candidate for re-election, and that Lincoln would like

to have him on the ticket with him in his second campaign. The President felt that Butler's record for patriotism and as the first prominent Democrat to volunteer for the war would add strength to the ticket. To this Butler answered, "Please say to Mr. Lincoln that while I appreciate with the fullest sensibility this act of friendship and the compliment he pays me, yet I must decline. Tell him I would not quit the field to be Vice-President even with himself as President, unless he gives me bond with sureties in the full sum of his four years' salary that he will die or resign within three months after his inauguration."

Butler expected that Grant would entrust him with a high command in the operations against Richmond, which he did, and thought his chances of service and distinction were much greater in the field than in the Vice-President's chair. Butler wrote Cameron:

"Ask him what he thinks I have done to deserve to be punished at forty-six years of age by being made to sit as presiding officer of the Senate and listen for four years to debates more or less stupid, in which I could take no part nor say a word . . . and then at the end of four years, as nowadays no Vice-President is ever elected President, because of the dignity of the position I have held I should not be permitted to go on with my profession, and, therefore, there would be nothing open for me to do save to ornament my lot in the cemetery tastefully and get into it gracefully and respectfully, as a Vice-President should do."

When Butler made that facetious remark about not accepting the secondary nomination unless Lincoln promised to die or resign within three months after the inauguration, he could not have foreseen that he was throwing away his chance to be President of the United States, for within six weeks after his inauguration Lincoln was dead.

When Butler died in 1893, Charles A. Dana paid him this tribute in an editorial in *The New York Sun*:

"For the last quarter of a century at least, Benjamin F. Butler has stood out as the most original, the most

American, and the most picturesque character in our public life. He had courage equal to every occasion; his given word needed no backer; his friendships and his enmities knew no variableness or shadow of turning; his opinions were never disguised nor withheld; his devotion to his country was without qualification; his faith in the future of liberty and democracy was neither intoxicated by their victories nor disheartened by their defeat. His intellectual resources were marvelous; his mind naturally adhered to the cause of the poor and the weak, and his delight was to stand by the underdog in the fight. In these qualities he was a great and exceptional man, and his friends valued him and loved him as truly as his foes detested him."

## 10

### Grant and "Baldy" Smith

"I want to ask you how you can place a man in command of the two army corps, who is as helpless as a child on the field of battle and as visionary as an opium eater in council?" So "Baldy" Smith, who commanded one of the two corps, the Eighteenth, wrote to Grant of the commander of the Army of the James, General Ben Butler. It was Smith's misfortune, indeed his tragedy, that he was fated to serve the last year of his connection with the Union armies under a "political" general whose military unfitness he thus truly described.

In some respects, the greatest military genius who served under Grant was General William Farrar Smith. Smith was one of the last so-called "Grant Men" to be associated with Grant in his campaigns. He joined Grant at Chattanooga in October of 1863 and served with him in the Virginia campaign until July of 1864. This relationship, although less than a year in duration, was one of the most important in Grant's military history. As in the case of Grant's connection with Washburne, Badeau, and Dana, it ended in anger and bitterness.

William Farrar Smith was born at St. Albans, Vermont on February 17th, 1824 and graduated from West Point in 1845, standing fourth in a class of forty-one cadets. Grant and McClellan were at West Point during part of this time, and the brilliant, but unfortunate, Fitz-John Porter was his

fellow classman and roommate. At the head of his class stood William Henry Whiting, who attained the highest standing ever achieved up to that time; Whiting commanded a division in the Confederate Army at Seven Pines. He was mortally wounded in the Union attack on Fort Fisher in January of 1865. Although born in Biloxi, Mississippi, his father and mother were both from Massachusetts.

Another classmate was Barnard Elliott Bee of South Carolina and Texas, known to his fellow cadets as "Bumble" Bee. Shortly before the outbreak of the war, Bee wrote to Smith telling him that the crisis had been precipitated by the politicians of both sides and that the army officers should not be compelled to "pull their chestnuts out of the fire." He suggested to Smith that they go to Texas, where his brother was a large landowner, and start a cattle ranch. Bee was mortally wounded at the battle of Bull Run, during the course of which he bestowed upon Thomas Jackson his sobriquet, "Stonewall." Smith called Bee the "dearest of all my friends."

After leaving West Point, "Baldy" Smith served as an engineer in the Southwest and in Florida. In Texas he contracted malarial poisoning, from the effects of which he suffered all through his army career. In 1855 he was appointed assistant professor of mathematics at West Point; his weakened condition following his sickness made the mental exertion of teaching too great a strain, and he requested leave after a year's work.

At the outbreak of the war he was commissioned colonel of the Third Vermont Volunteers; as a brigadier general he later commanded the Vermont Brigade, known as the "Iron Brigade." While in command of the Vermont Brigade, Smith was much troubled by the laxity of men on duty on the picket line. It seemed almost impossible to impress upon officers and men alike the importance to the safety of the command of a vigilant picket guard. He determined to improve conditions by giving the men a lesson. He arranged with one of the headquarters staff "that the first perfectly incontestable case of a picket guard

asleep on post should be brought before a general court-martial; that the judge advocate should press for the extreme punishment under the law; that the orders and preparation for carrying the sentence into effect should be made; and that at the last moment a pardon should be received." A private of the 3rd Regiment, Vermont Volunteers, was found asleep on his post. He was found guilty by the court-martial and sentenced to be shot. At the last moment, at daylight on the morning of the day set for execution, Smith, according to his arrangement with headquarters, pardoned him.

This would seem to dispose of the famous and oft-repeated story that Lincoln visited the Vermont boy in his tent and, sitting on a cracker box, asked him about his family and examined a picture of his mother. Lincoln then supposedly told the lad that he was to be pardoned, but inquired what he might expect in repayment for all his trouble and expense. The boy spoke of putting a mortgage on the farm, his bounty money, and a contribution by his comrades. Then Lincoln, putting his hand on his shoulder, said to him: "My boy, the bounty money, the pay money, and the mortgage money will not be enough to pay my debt. There is only one person in the world who can pay my debt, and that person is William Scott. If from this day William Scott does his duty, so that when he comes to die he can look me in the face as he does now, and say, 'I have kept my promise and I have done my duty as a soldier,' then all my debt will be paid." According to the story, the boy was mortally wounded not long afterwards in one of the battles on the Peninsula; when he lay dying, he was reported to have requested his comrades to inform the President that he had kept his promise, and that even then he could see the President's kind face when he told him he was pardoned.

We do not like to dismiss a story, so characteristic of Lincoln and his kind heart, as apocryphal; but we must accept Smith's statement: "Mr. Lincoln never showed any special anxiety about the case that I ever heard. He never com-

municated with me on the subject, and he certainly never drove to my headquarters with reference to the case. His action in the matter was in accord with the preconcerted plan in the case.”<sup>1</sup>

In McClellan's Peninsular campaign, Smith led the Second Division of the Fourth Corps of the Army of the Potomac under the command of General William B. Franklin. As a highly intelligent officer, Smith commended himself to General McClellan, who frequently discussed his military plans with him. On the northern side, McClellan, Smith, and Franklin; and on the southern side, Lee and Joseph E. Johnston were the men who at the war's beginning were regarded as the best educated, the most brilliant, and the most certain of achieving distinction.

While the army camped on the James River, Fernando Wood and other Democratic politicians from New York appeared at McClellan's headquarters. Thereafter, Smith thought he detected a change in McClellan's cordial manner, and that he now treated him with unusual coolness and reserve. McClellan soon told Smith that he wished to show him a letter which he had written to Fernando Wood and the others who had urged him to run for the Presidency in 1864. In this letter McClellan accepted their proposition, and stated that the war should be so conducted as to conciliate the people of the South and impress them with the idea that the Union armies intended merely to execute the laws and protect their property. When Smith read the letter he said to McClellan with great earnestness, "General, do you not see that looks like treason, and that it will ruin you and all of us?" After some further conversation, McClellan destroyed the letter in Smith's presence and thanked him for his frank and friendly counsel.

In the Antietam campaign Smith commanded the Second Division of the Sixth Corps under General W. B. Franklin. Soon after that battle, Fernando Wood and his friends appeared at McClellan's headquarters to renew

---

<sup>1</sup> Smith, William F., manuscript autobiography.



their proposals. Returning one night from some duty and seeing a light in McClellan's tent, Smith entered to make his report. When he had finished and was about to leave, McClellan asked him to be seated. When the others had departed, McClellan revealed that Wood and his friends had again urged him to be a candidate for the Presidency in 1864. He then read to Smith the letter which he had written Wood pledging himself to carry on the war according to the lines indicated in the previous letter. In the Presidential campaign of 1864, Thurlow Weed, the New York Republican leader, went to Vermont to endeavor to obtain through Governor Smith the letter which McClellan had written to the Democratic leaders. Governor John C. Smith of Vermont, a cousin of "Baldy" Smith, had visited the White House to inform Lincoln of Wood's two visits to McClellan and the letter which McClellan had written. According to Thayer, the original was thought to be in the possession of Fernando Wood.<sup>1</sup> Weed wanted to use the letter as a campaign document in the election of 1864.

In the bloody defeat at Fredericksburg on December 13th, 1862, Smith commanded the Sixth Corps of General Franklin's Third Grand Division. After the disastrous battle, when Burnside was starting another movement against Lee, Smith and Franklin went over the head of Burnside, the commander of the Army of the Potomac, and addressed a letter to Lincoln protesting against the overland campaign through Virginia and advocating the plan which McClellan had adopted. According to this plan, the army was to be conveyed by water to the James River and the Peninsula and attack Richmond from that direction. This letter, one of the ablest papers in American military history, set forth unanswerable arguments as to the advantages of a campaign by the Peninsula between the York and the James Rivers. Such a communication, passing by the commanding general and addressed to the President, was altogether unusual and contrary to army regulations. The

---

<sup>1</sup> Thayer, *Life of John Hay*, Vol. I. pp. 129-133.

President nevertheless answered the letter on the following day in these terms:

"I have hastily read the plan and shall try to give it more deliberate consideration, with the aid of military men. Meanwhile, let me say it seems to me to present the old question of preference between the line of the Peninsula and the line you are now upon. The difficulties you point out pertaining to the Fredericksburg line are obvious and palpable. But now, as heretofore, if you go to the James River, a large part of the army must remain on or near the Fredericksburg line to protect Washington. It is the old difficulty. When I saw General Franklin at Harrison's Landing on James River last July, I cannot be mistaken in saying that he distinctly advised the bringing of the army away from there."<sup>1</sup>

In his reply to the President, General Franklin wrote that the plan he and General Smith had submitted assumed the retention of a sufficient garrison for Washington; as to having advised the withdrawal of McClellan's army from the James in the previous July after the Seven Days' battle, Franklin said he acted as he did on account of the enormous sick list and because the two worst months of August and September lay before them.

When Hooker succeeded Burnside in command of the Army of the Potomac, Smith was placed at the head of the Ninth Corps. His command of the Ninth Corps, however, was brief; although he had been recommended and nominated as Major-General of Volunteers, the Senate adjourned without acting on his nomination, and he resumed for a time the rank of brigadier. He was on leave at the time of the Gettysburg campaign, but at once volunteered his services in any capacity. He was appointed to the command of a division of militia under Major-General Couch at Harrisburg. He did not participate in the great three days' battle on the hills and meadows of Gettysburg, but took

---

<sup>1</sup> After the Seven Day's battle, when McClellan withdrew from the vicinity of Richmond to Harrison's Landing, Lincoln visited the army and consulted Franklin, commanding a corps, among others, as to the next step.

part in the pursuit of Lee's army across the Potomac River. His reward was an order for his arrest by the vindictive Secretary of War Stanton, issued on the ground that he had taken Pennsylvania militia beyond the limits of the state. Fortunately, the protest of General Couch caused the Secretary of War to rescind this ungenerous and unjust edict.

Smith now appears as an important participant in one of the greatest crises of the war. Under General Rosecrans's skillful direction, the Union Army had taken Chattanooga and driven Bragg's army into Georgia. Reinforced by Longstreet's corps of Lee's army, Bragg suddenly turned on Rosecrans, defeated him in the great battle of Chickamauga in September of 1863, and drove him into the defenses of Chattanooga. On a visit to the Confederate Army, Jefferson Davis stood by the side of General Bragg on Pulpit Rock on Lookout Mountain and looked down upon the besieged Army of the Cumberland with sure confidence that it would be compelled to surrender. The authorities at Washington acted promptly and with great energy. Grant was summoned from Memphis to take general command, and the 11th and 12th Corps under Major-General Joseph Hooker were detached from the Army of the Potomac and hurried to Chattanooga in the longest, largest, and quickest transfer of troops made during the war.

Fortunately for Smith and also for the Army of the Cumberland, he was assigned to service with General Rosecrans at Chattanooga in October of 1863. When Rosecrans first proposed that he join his staff as chief engineer of the army, Smith demurred, for he had already commanded a division and a corps, and felt that if he took a position on the staff he would drop out of sight and lose all chance of promotion. But after Rosecrans had pointed out to him the army's greatest need for a skilled engineer, he accepted the post; his discharge of his duties won him the praise of high army commanders and promotion to the rank of major-general.

To understand the critical situation of the Union Army at Chattanooga, it must be remembered that its chief base of supplies was at Nashville, one hundred and fifty miles to the west. Supplies could be brought from Nashville to Bridgeport on the Tennessee River by rail. After the defeat of Chickamauga, General Rosecrans withdrew his troops from Lookout Mountain, which was immediately seized by Bragg's troops, who placed batteries to command the railroad and the wagon road at the base of the mountain. Supplies could now reach the Army of the Cumberland only by a wagon haul of sixty miles over the mountains; it would have been impossible to supply an army of forty thousand men by that route for any length of time. The army was put on half rations and the artillery horses were sent back to Bridgeport to save them from perishing for lack of fodder; however, one-third of them died on the journey. The supply of ammunition was then so low that there was just enough for one more battle. The trains of supplies which attempted the long haul from Bridgeport over the rugged mountains were frequently attacked and cut off by Bragg's cavalry. Badeau describes the situation: "And here the Army of the Cumberland lay, in the hot sun and chilly nights of September, and under the heavy rains of autumn, without sufficient food, with few tents, half supplied with ammunition, the camp streets filled with dead and dying animals; with few blankets, and no extra clothing."

Such was the plight of the Army of the Cumberland when General Grant, lame from recent falls from his horse and carried part of the way over the mountains in the arms of soldiers, arrived at the headquarters of General Thomas on the 23rd of October.

Soon after his arrival at Rosecrans's headquarters, Smith had stated his opinion as to the best method of opening the line of communications, but was so abruptly challenged by Rosecrans that he did not mention the matter again until the afternoon of October 18th, when he told Rosecrans he wanted to go down the river and make a reconnaissance.

Rosecrans answered, "By all means go, and I will go with you." Early the next morning they rode off together down the river. On the way, Rosecrans stopped at one of the hospitals, and remained so long that Smith rode on, accompanied part of the way by Charles A. Dana. As he rode down the north bank of the Tennessee, he stopped from time to time to inspect the configuration of the land on both sides, searching for a proper anchorage for a pontoon bridge. He found nothing suitable, and was about to return to Chattanooga when he happened to notice a battery by the river bank. He rode into the works, inquired of the officer in charge as to its purpose, and was informed that it covered the crossing at Brown's Ferry. Learning that the pickets on both sides of the river rarely fired at one another, Smith went down to the shore, where he dismounted and sat for two hours on the bank, studying the other shore and the hills about the ferry through his glasses. When he arose and remounted his horse to return toward Chattanooga, he had the plan of relief clearly worked out in his mind. That evening when he reached headquarters, he learned that Rosecrans had been superseded and that General Thomas was now in command of the Army of the Cumberland. That night, the 19th of October, he wrote to his wife: "I shall give Thomas up if he does not get the river opened up for us in six days, for by that time we shall have to fall back if we do not succeed."

When Smith first proposed his daring plan, Thomas consulted some of his officers and then said to Smith: "I have been conferring with some generals about your plan, and they say it is in contravention of the art of war and would not succeed . . . that you are a broken-down general from the East who wishes notoriety at any cost, and that your plans would cause the destruction of two of our best brigades." Smith protested that there was little risk in the enterprise; as for the other criticism, Smith said that anyone who caused the death of troops under his command for notoriety's sake should be shot. Satisfied as to his sincerity

and earnestness, Thomas authorized Smith to proceed with his plan.

On the night of Grant's arrival at Chattanooga, Smith wrote to his wife, "Grant is here, and tomorrow I feel that this torpid animal of an army will wake up and move." In this he was not disappointed; the very next day, October 24th, Grant rode with Smith down the river, listening to an outline of the plans already approved by Thomas for opening the line of communications and relieving the army.

In brief, Smith planned to send about two thousand men down the river by night to seize Brown's Ferry on the south side of the Tennessee River and near the mouth of Lookout Valley. At the same time a large force was to march overland along the north side of the river, cross over on boats at Brown's Ferry, seize and fortify the neighboring hills, and then build a pontoon bridge over the river. General Hooker, who was at Bridgeport with the 11th and 12th Corps, was to cross by the pontoon bridge there, march to Brown's Ferry and thence into the Lookout Valley, and thus open the road from Bridgeport to Chattanooga.

This plan so commended itself to General Grant that he at once gave his approval and ordered Smith to make preparations for implementing it. Although Smith was an engineer officer and a newcomer to the Army of the Cumberland, General Grant placed him in command of the whole expedition down the river.

The night of October 26th was a momentous one in the history of the Army of the Cumberland and of the Civil War. At 3 o'clock in the dark and foggy morning, eighteen hundred men under command of General William Hazen embarked in sixty pontoon boats, each carrying thirty men. Silently, without oars and drifting with the current in the gloom of the night, the boats glided noiselessly down the Tennessee, floated around the base of Lookout Mountain, where the Confederate soldiers in their tents were dreaming of the conquest of the starving army on the plain below them, and landed at Brown's Ferry on the south side of the river. There the Confederate outposts fired a few shots and

fled. The crossing had been secured. Meanwhile, Smith's three thousand men, equipped with bridge-building material, marched down the north bank of the Tennessee to the point across from Brown's Ferry where Hazen had seized the crossing. By daybreak Smith's whole force had been ferried across the river and had seized the heights beyond. Work was immediately commenced on the pontoon bridge, which was completed at 10 in the morning. The next night Hooker's troops arrived from Bridgeport to encamp near Brown's Ferry, and by the following day were in possession of Lookout Valley. Five days after Grant's arrival the road to Bridgeport and Nashville had been opened. Horses, mules, ammunition, fodder, and rations poured into the camps by road and by steamer. The gloom that had settled down on the Army of the Cumberland after Chickamauga and in the long defense of Chattanooga had lifted like the morning mists which at that season of the year hung over the Tennessee. The spectre of starvation, defeat, or retreat over the rough mountain roads vanished; the army was ready for another engagement. The battle of Chattanooga was not fought for almost a month, yet it commenced in reality with a notable victory when Smith ferried his troops over the Tennessee and seized and fortified the hills beyond.

Smith's contribution in saving the army after Chickamauga and preparing the stage for the great victory at Chattanooga won him the highest commendation from Thomas, commanding the Army of the Cumberland; from Sherman, commanding the Army of the Tennessee; from the Secretary of War, Stanton, and from General Grant. In his report on the battle of Chattanooga, General Sherman pays full tribute to the genius and work of Smith. Speaking of Smith's second bridge over the Tennessee River, he says: "I have never beheld any work done so quietly, so well, and I doubt if the history of war can show a bridge of that extent, viz., 1350 feet, laid so noiselessly and well in so short a time. I attribute it to the genius and intelligence of General William F. Smith."

That careful and intelligent observer, Charles A. Dana,

special assistant to the Secretary of War, telegraphed to Stanton on October 28th about operations then under way: "Everything perfectly successful. The river is now open and a short and good road in our possession along the south shore . . . . The great success, however, is General Smith's operation at the mouth of Lookout Valley. Its brilliance cannot be exaggerated."

In his General Order to the Army of the Cumberland issued after Smith had restored communications with the army's base at Bridgeport, General Thomas said: "The recent movements resulting in the establishment of a new and short line of communications with Bridgeport, and the possession of the Tennessee River, were of so brilliant a character as to deserve special notice. The skill and cool gallantry of the officers and men composing the expedition under Brigadier General William F. Smith . . . deserves the highest praise." In a later report Thomas said: "To Brigadier General W. F. Smith, Chief Engineer, should be accorded great praise for the ingenuity which conceived and the ability which executed the movement at Brown's Ferry."

The grim Secretary of War Stanton, who hitherto had entertained a prejudice against Smith because he had volunteered advice as to the conduct of the campaign against Richmond, now changed his opinion; when General Butler sought to have Smith transferred to his command in the Army of the James, in November of 1863, Stanton wrote: "The services of W. F. Smith, now Chief of Engineers in the Army of the Cumberland, are indispensable in that command, and it will be impossible to assign him to your department."

In a communication addressed to the Secretary of War on November 12, 1863 General Grant said: "I would respectfully recommend that Brigadier-General W. F. Smith be placed first on the list for promotion to the rank of major-general. He is possessed of one of the clearest military heads in the army; is very practical and industrious. No man in the service is better qualified than he for our largest commands."

When nothing resulted from this recommendation, Grant



communicated directly with Lincoln on November 30th after the victory at Chattanooga:

"In a previous letter addressed to the Secretary of War, I recommended Brigadier-General William F. Smith for promotion. Recent events have entirely satisfied me of his great capabilities and merits, and I hasten to renew the recommendation and to urge it. The interests of the public service would be better subserved by this promotion than the interest of General Smith himself. My reason for writing this letter now is to ask that W. F. Smith's name be placed first on the list for promotion of all those previously recommended by me."

Washington manifested considerable dissatisfaction with General Meade after his abortive Mine Run campaign in November of 1863, and the names of possible successors to his command of the Army of the Potomac were under discussion. Both Secretary of War Stanton and General Halleck had come to the conclusion that Smith was the best man to succeed Meade. They entertained some doubts, however, as to Smith's disposition and personal character. Charles A. Dana and General James H. Wilson went to Washington after the victory at Chattanooga and occupied themselves in Smith's behalf. In a letter of February 14th, 1864, Wilson wrote to Smith: "Mr. Dana and I had a long talk, and conclude, first, that Meade is not fully, nor nearly, equal to the occasion . . . He is weak, timid, and almost puerile . . . The winter has been spent in idle waiting, waiting for something to turn up." Both Stanton and Halleck now agreed with Grant that Smith should be selected in preference to Sherman, who had also been nominated.

On the bronze tablet erected to the memory of Smith in the Vermont State House at Montpelier there appears a quotation from a letter Dana wrote to Grant on December 21st, 1863; this shows that Lincoln, Stanton, Grant, and Halleck all considered Smith the man best qualified for this most important army command. The quotation reads:

". . . The surest means of getting the rebels altogether out of East Tennessee is to be found in the Army of the

Potomac . . . This naturally led to your second proposition, namely, that either Sherman or W. F. Smith should be put in command of that army . . . Both the Secretary of War and General Halleck said . . . 'General W. F. Smith would be the best person to try' . . . The President, the Secretary of War and General Halleck agree with you in thinking that it would be on the whole much better to select him."<sup>1</sup>

When Grant returned to the East as lieutenant-general commanding all the armies of the Union in March of 1864, the officer who accompanied him in his private car and to whom he planned to give the Army of the Potomac in the event of a change was General Smith. When Grant arrived in Washington, however, he found some of those in authority opposed to Smith's appointment to such a high post. Thus it came about that the great battle planner failed of appointment to the command of the Army of the Potomac or to a place as chief adviser on Grant's staff and was assigned to the impossible Butler in the Army of the James.

In this complete change of plan for utilizing Smith's services, Grant was doubtless influenced by the prejudice engendered against Smith in some Washington army circles by his well-known opinion that the way to defeat Lee's army and capture Richmond was not by the overland route, which Grant decided to follow, but by the water route to the Peninsula between the York and James rivers, in conformity with McClellan's campaign of 1862.

As Grant was about to open the Virginia campaign, Smith wrote to two of Grant's close friends, probably Rawlins and Wilson, to advise against the overland plan of attack on Richmond. In this letter Smith undoubtedly advanced the same objections to the overland campaign that he and General William B. Franklin had stated in the joint letter they addressed to President Lincoln after the tragic defeat of the Army of the Potomac in the battle of Fredericksburg. Smith's wisdom in preferring the overland route was soon confirmed when General Grant, after his bloody repulse at

<sup>1</sup>-*Official Records*, pp. 31 f., 457.

*York & James*

Cold Harbor on June 3rd, crossed the James and began where McClellan had stopped in June of 1862. If the war were being fought today, there is not the slightest doubt that a highly trained army staff such as directed the armies of the United States in World War II would operate by the Peninsula and not by the overland route.

Why then, it may be asked, did General Grant choose the overland route through Virginia in preference to that of the James River? It was, as we have seen, contrary to the advice of General Smith, then Grant's intimate and regarded by him as the consummate strategist. It was also contrary to his own former opinion while he was yet a major-general before he came east as general-in-chief of all the armies; at that time he had addressed a letter to Washington stating his objections to the overland route and urging a coast movement south of the James River. In this communication he argued that, since there were troops sufficient to form two armies, each equal in numbers to that of Lee, the defense of Washington could be provided for while an invincible army attacked Richmond by way of the Peninsula and the James River.<sup>1</sup> What led Grant to adopt the overland route of attack and renounce a plan of campaign supported by the soundest military principles remains in the realm of the unknown. Neither in his *Memoirs* nor in his *General Report* of the operations of all the armies from March of 1864 to June of 1865 does Grant discuss the matter.

Grant was greatly disappointed in the part Butler's large Army of the James had played in the movements against Richmond, and requested General Halleck to send a "competent officer there to inspect, and report by telegraph what is being done, and what in his judgment it is advisable to do." Grant was uncertain where to lay the blame, for he said in this letter to Halleck: "The fault may be with the commander, or it may be with his subordinates. General Smith, whilst a very able officer, is obstinate, and

---

<sup>1</sup> Swinton, *Army of the Potomac*, p. 408.

likely to condemn whatever is not suggested by himself."

Halleck at once sent down to Butler's army at Bermuda Hundred two very intelligent officers, General Montgomery C. Meigs, Quartermaster General of the Army, and General Barnard. In their first report they said they thought that the "want of harmony was exaggerated," at least so far as General Smith was concerned. In their final report of May 24th they recommended one of two courses to Grant: "Place an officer of military experience and knowledge in command of these two corps; or, second, withdraw 20,000 men to be used elsewhere. General Butler is a man of rare and great ability, but he has not experience and training to direct and control movements in battle . . . Success would be more certain were Smith in command untrammelled, and General Butler remanded to the administrative duties of the department, in which he has shown such rare and great ability." This last counsel was finally adopted by General Grant and then strangely revoked.

With Butler's army shut up in its entrenchments at Bermuda Hundred, Grant detached from it Smith's Eighteenth Corps and joined it to the Army of the Potomac to enable it to participate in the battle of Cold Harbor on June 3rd. This was the battle that terminated the first stage of Grant's campaign to destroy Lee's army and take Richmond. It was the battle that no one of Grant's captains, probably not Grant himself, expected to win. The officers and the men in the ranks were so convinced that the attack was hopeless and that the slaughter would be great that they wrote their names on bits of paper and pinned them to their uniforms so that their bodies might be identified after the conflict—pathetic and noble witness to the instinct for immortality and the desire to be remembered. Wilson contends that, while Grant ordered an attack "all along the line, not a soul among the generals or in the fighting line dreamed of success, and not a commander, from highest to lowest, except Smith and Upton, made any adequate preparation to achieve it."

With sixteen thousand men Smith left Bermuda Hun-

dred and arrived at Cold Harbor to receive orders to cooperate with General Wright, who was posted on his left. According to Grant, his position in the line was the most difficult to defend: "The ground over which this corps . . . had to move was the most exposed of any over which charges were made. An open plain intervened between the contending forces at this point, which was exposed both to a direct and a cross fire." Despite these difficulties and after careful reconnaissance, Smith made a skillful and vigorous assault and broke through the Confederate lines to capture a number of the outer rifle pits; had the other corps performed as well, the story might have had a different ending. The attack "all along the line" suffered from an unfortunate lack of co-ordination and Smith, after he had breached the Confederate position, was hurled back with heavy losses. When he marched back to Bermuda Hundred, he had lost six thousand of the men who comprised his corps when he joined the Army of the Potomac at Cold Harbor.

General Franklin called this engagement the "infamous battle of Cold Harbor" because Grant's army suffered such a bloody repulse without the usual compensation of inflicting heavy losses on the enemy; Smith said, "We were engaged during the days of awful and useless butchery which followed." The heroic Upton, another officer in the Army of the Potomac and by common consent one of the most intelligent, described the battle: "Thousands of lives might have been spared by the exercise of a little skill; but as it is, the courage of the men is expected to obviate all difficulties. I must confess that so long as I see such incompetency, there is no grade in the army to which I do not aspire." Referring to the same battle Upton subsequently said:

"On that day we had a murderous engagement. I say murderous, because we were recklessly ordered to assault the enemy's entrenchments, knowing neither their strength nor position . . . I am very sorry to add that I have seen but little generalship during the campaign. Some of our corps commanders are not fit to be corporals.

Lazy and indifferent, they will not even ride along their lines, yet without hesitancy they will order us to attack the enemy, no matter what their position or numbers."

Stung by his repulse at Cold Harbor and the useless slaughter of his men, Smith was outspoken and unsparing in his criticism of the battle and the management of the Army of the Potomac. He freely expressed his opinions to Grant's chief of staff, Rawlins, and to Grant himself; he blamed the commander of the Army of the Potomac, General Meade, most of all for this ill-fought battle.<sup>1</sup> Although Grant later recalled these criticisms as one of the counts against Smith, there is no evidence that he resented Smith's complaints about Meade at the time they were uttered. Officers of every grade joined Smith in unreserved condemnation. Meade's fortunes then were at their lowest ebb, and Grant contemplated replacing him with Hancock.

After the repulse at Cold Harbor, Smith rejoined Butler at Bermuda Hundred. There he received Grant's orders to attack Petersburg and, if possible, capture the town before the Confederates holding it could be re-enforced. With little opportunity to plan the attack as he always did with the greatest of care, General Smith made a hard march in the stifling heat to dispose a good part of his corps into position to make an assault on the Confederate lines on the afternoon of June 15th. He had no engineer officer at his disposal and was forced, alone, on foot and sometimes on his knees, to make a careful reconnaissance of the Confederate position. At 7 in the evening he launched the assault and captured five of the enemy's redan parapets. The

---

<sup>1</sup> A striking example of the lack of co-operation among the corps of the Army of the Potomac is evident in the order General Meade sent to each corps commander a few hours after the failure of the first assault at Cold Harbor to renew the attack without reference to the troops on their right or left. This order from Meade went through the usual channels to the lowest officers, who in turn gave it to the men under their command; "but no man moved, and the immobile lines pronounced a verdict, silent, yet emphatic, against further slaughter." Swinton, *Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac*, p. 487.

colored troops in Smith's corps played a great part in the success. As the battle was coming to an end General Hancock, who ranked Smith, appeared on the scene with several divisions of the Second Corps and volunteered to assist Smith in any way desired. Smith's white troops were exhausted by their long march in the excessive heat and their evening attack; his colored troops were so elated by their success that they "could hardly be kept in order." Smith, therefore, requested Hancock to relieve the troops in the trenches, which he did between 11 at night and 2 in the morning. The next day Meade arrived; Hancock was temporarily relieved from command of his corps because of an opening of the wound he had received in the third day's battle at Gettysburg.

Grant was greatly disappointed that Petersburg was not taken at that time; this would have obviated much hard fighting, great loss of life, and the long siege which ensued. He attributed this lack of a victory to the fact that Hancock's failure to receive orders for his part in the battle resulted in his arrival on the field in the evening instead of in the middle of the previous afternoon. In reality, however, the final responsibility for the failure to take Petersburg on June 15th rested not on the shoulders of Smith, Hancock, Meade, or Butler, but upon Grant himself. The whole operation illustrated the dangers inherent in the loose organization of an army directed by two commanders and two staffs. Neither Meade nor Hancock received advance notice that Smith intended to attack Petersburg on the 15th.

Smith considered his attack on Petersburg the most brilliant accomplishment of his entire military career. General Grant's criticism, written long afterward, of Smith's slowness and overcaution in the operation was no doubt somewhat colored by the later unhappy termination of their friendly relationship and the consequent bitter feeling which arose between them. Certainly, at the time of the battle Grant did not complain of Smith's management. When Grant arrived on the day following the struggle to inspect with General Meade the position Smith had taken the night

before, he remarked, "Well, Smith has taken a line of works stronger than anything we have seen in this campaign."

Butler blamed Smith for the failure to take Petersburg; Smith blamed Meade and Grant; Grant blamed Meade for not notifying Hancock; Hancock blamed Meade; and Meade blamed Grant. Thus did the Army of the Potomac stumble and blunder on its way to final victory.<sup>1</sup>

The Petersburg failure resulted in an intensification of the dispute between Butler and Smith; the following is a sample of the correspondence which passed between them. Butler had written Smith to complain that a column of his corps ordered to move at daylight had passed headquarters in the heat of the day:

"The great fault of all our movements is dilatoriness, and if this is a fault of your division commanders, let them be very severely reprov'd therefor. I found it necessary to relieve one general for this among other causes, and in justice to him you will hardly expect me to pass in silence a like fault where of less moment. The delay of Grouchy for three hours lost to Napoleon Waterloo and an Empire."

To this Smith replied:

"I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your extraordinary note of 9:00 A.M. In giving to your rank and experience all the respect which is their due, I must call your attention to the fact that a reprimand can only come from the sentence of a court martial, and I shall accept nothing as such. You will also pardon me for observing that I have some years been engaged in marching troops, and I think in experience of that kind, at least, I am your superior. Your accusation of dilatoriness on my part this morning, or at any other time since I have been under your orders, is not founded on fact, and your threat of relieving me does not frighten me in the least."

The same day Smith forwarded to Grant copies of this correspondence with Butler and asked to be relieved from

---

<sup>1</sup> For a very able account of the faulty organization of the Army of the Potomac and the Army of the James, see Wilson, James H., *Life and Services of William Farrar Smith*, pp. 85-92.



duty in his department. This evidently determined Grant to put an end to the feud in the Army of the James and dispense with Butler's services. On July 1st Grant wrote to General Halleck as follows:

"Mr. Dana, Assistant Secretary of War, has just returned. He informs me that he called attention to the necessity of sending General Butler to another field of duty. Whilst I have no difficulty with General Butler, finding him always clear in his conception of orders and prompt to obey, yet there is a want of knowledge how to execute, and particularly a prejudice against him as a commander that operates against his usefulness. I have feared that it might become necessary to separate him and General Smith. The latter is really one of the most efficient officers in service, readiest in expedients, and most skillful in the management of troops in action. I would dislike removing him from his present command unless it was to increase it, but, as I say, may have to do it yet, if General Butler remains. . . . If a command could be cut out such as Mr. Dana proposed; namely, Kentucky, Illinois and Indiana, or if the Department of the Missouri, Kansas and the States of Illinois and Indiana could be merged together and General Butler put over it, I believe the good of the service would be subserved. I regret the necessity of asking for a change in commanders here, but General Butler not being a soldier by education or experience, is in the hands of his subordinates in the execution of all operations military. I would feel strengthened with Smith, Franklin or J. J. Reynolds commanding the right wing of this army."

Halleck replied to this communication from Grant on the 3rd of July, stating that he had foreseen from the first that he would eventually find it necessary to relieve Butler "on account of his total unfitness to command in the field and his general quarrelsome character." To send Butler to Kentucky, he added, would probably "cause an insurrection" in that state and would embarrass Sherman, whom Butler would probably try to supersede by making use of his talent for political intrigue. "As for sending him to

Missouri," Halleck remarked, "although it might not be objectionable to have a free fight between him and Rosecrans [who was then commander there], the government would be seriously embarrassed by the local difficulties." Halleck then suggested as a compromise measure that Butler be left in local command of his department and that Smith be given command of a new army corps. On the other hand, if Butler were to be relieved entirely, Halleck thought it best to create a new department for him in New England.

This extraordinary communication emphasizes the fact that Butler, by common consent unfit to command troops in the field, yet had such personal and political influence that his military superiors were at their wits' end to know how to deal with him.

On July 2nd, the day after Grant had suggested Butler's dismissal, he received a long and friendly letter from Smith, who said, in part:

"I wanted to be where I could be useful, and, thinking the more troops there were in this department, the more blunders and murders would be committed, I went gladly to the Army of the Potomac with the most hearty good will and intentions. In looking back over the sneers and false charges and the snubbings I received there, I only wonder, General, at my own moderation. I then came back, thinking that your presence here would prevent blunders, and that I could once more be useful.

"Two letters have been written to me which I think any gentleman would be ashamed to acknowledge as emanating from him and for which there was not even the shadow of an excuse. This has induced me to believe that someone else would be of far more service here than I am. And as my only ambition is to be of service, I determined to present the just plea of my health to remove one of the obstacles to harmony in this army, and that, General, if you will look closely into the campaign, you will find to be one of the causes of want of success, when you needed and expected it. In conclusion, General, I am willing to do anything and endure anything which will be of service to the country or yourself.

"Now I am through with the personal, and I want simply to call your attention to the fact that no man since the Revolution has had a tithe of the responsibility which now rests on your shoulders, and to ask you how you can place a man in command of two army corps who is as helpless as a child on the field of battle and as visionary as an opium eater in council, and that, too, when you have such men as Franklin and Wright available to help you, to make you famous for all time, and our country great and free beyond all other nations of the world. Think of it, my dear General, and let your good sense, and not your heart, decide questions of this kind."

This letter, of course, takes for granted a close and cordial relationship between Grant and Smith; under any other circumstance, it would have been a presumptuous communication for a subordinate to address to his commanding officer. Regarded thus, it must be looked upon as a noble and eloquent appeal to Grant to act for the best interests of the army and the country. That Grant took no offense at the letter is clear from the fact that four days later he asked that Smith be promoted to the command of all the troops in Butler's department. On July 6th, Grant cut the Gordian knot of the Butler-Smith difficulty by telegraphing Halleck to obtain an order assigning those troops of the Department of Virginia and North Carolina which were serving in the field to the command of Smith, and ordering Butler to his headquarters at Fortress Monroe. The next day, with Lincoln's approval, General Order No. 225 was issued, ordering the troops of Butler's department which were then serving in the field to be constituted as the 18th Army Corps, with Smith in command; Butler was to establish his headquarters at Fortress Monroe. To all intents and purposes, this order relieved Butler and replaced him with Smith.

Two days after this directive was issued, Smith had a long and friendly interview with Grant at his headquarters. Grant had always welcomed Smith's counsel and, up to this time, had never displayed any resentment at his frank and often severe criticisms of measures and men. At this inter-

view of July 9th, Smith pointed out to Grant "the blunders of the late campaigns of the Army of the Potomac and the terrible waste of life that had resulted" from what he considered a "want of generalship in its present commander," Meade. Among other instances, he referred to the "fearful slaughter at Cold Harbor on the 3rd of June. General Grant went into the discussion, defending General Meade stoutly, but finally acknowledged, to use his own words, 'that there had been a butchery at Cold Harbor, but that he had said nothing about it, because it could do no good.' Not a word was said as to my right to criticise General Meade then, and I left without a suspicion that General Grant had taken it in any other way than it was meant, and I do not think he did misunderstand me."

In high spirits over Grant's order which elevated him to a post in the armies operating against Lee and Richmond second only to that of Meade and Grant himself, Smith set out for New York on a brief leave of absence. When he returned to his headquarters ten days later, he was astounded to find a communication from Grant revoking the order of July 7th, restoring Butler to full command in his department, and directing Smith to proceed to New York to await further assignment. One of Smith's division commanders, General Martindale, was so distressed by the dismissal of Smith that he offered to act as an intermediary, and assured Smith that he "would make everything right in two hours" if he would consent to serve under Butler as before. To this proposal Smith replied that "no commission was worth such a price."

This strange and sudden reversal in the fortunes of Butler and Smith caused considerable stir in army circles. Colonel Theodore Lyman, a member of Meade's staff, wrote thus of this astounding result of Smith's encounter with Butler:

"Woe to those who stand up against him in the way of diplomacy! Let the history of Baldy Smith be a warning to all such. It is an instructive one, and according to camp rumor runs thus: It was said that Smith, relying

on his reputation with Grant, had great ideas of shelving Butler, and Fame even reported that he had ideas also of giving Meade a tilt overboard. So what do we see but an order stating that Major General Smith was to command the forces in the field of the Department with his headquarters at Fortress Monroe. Next day everybody said, 'So, Butler has gone.' Not exactly. Butler is still there, precisely as before. Off goes Smith to Washington mysteriously; down pounces Butler on City Point. Long confab with General Grant. Back comes Smith comfortably, and is confronted with an order to 'proceed at once to New York and await further orders.' Thus did Smith the Bald try the Machiavelli against Butler the Cross-eyed, and got floored at the first round. 'Why did he do so?' asked Butler with the easy air of a strong man. 'I had no military ambition; he might have known all that. I have more important things in view.'"

How shall we explain Grant's extraordinary reversal? Is it possible that Lincoln had something to do with rescinding the original order and restoring Butler to full command in his department? The President undoubtedly felt a debt of gratitude to Butler for his courageous and energetic support of the government when he brought his Massachusetts Brigade of infantry to Washington at the beginning of the war; furthermore, Lincoln always went out of his way to show favors to "War Democrats," such as McClelland and Logan of Illinois, Frank Blair of Missouri, and Butler. In addition, the President was not unmindful of the political repercussion of the removal of generals who had a political following which could be turned against him in his campaign for a second term, which Lincoln sought as eagerly as he had the first.

That Lincoln did feel some concern about removing Butler is clear from the fact that the original order which read, "Major General Smith is assigned by the President to the command of the forces in the field," was altered and the words "by the President" were stricken out. This would seem to indicate that, after conferring with Halleck and Stanton, Lincoln felt some anxiety about Butler's reaction

and directed that the words be deleted. He must have been aware, however, that the astute Butler would know that Grant, Halleck, and Stanton would never have issued such an order without the President's consent. It is unlikely that Lincoln played any part in the revocation of the order.

When Butler received the order on July 9th, he ordered a steamer at once to take him to Grant's headquarters at City Point. Charles A. Dana, who was present at the first part of Butler's interview with Grant, said that the conference took place immediately after breakfast while Grant was sitting at the table outdoors. Butler came "jingling up with some officers of his staff and with a haughty air and flushed face" held out a copy of the order and said to Grant, "General Grant, did you issue this order?" Grant looked at it and then said, in a hesitating manner and stammering, "No, no; not in that form." Seeing that the interview was going to be an unpleasant one, Dana took his leave, but with the firm impression that Butler had somehow "cowed" his commanding officer.

That same evening Butler telegraphed his chief of staff, Colonel J. W. Shaffer: "Do not trouble yourself about the order. It is all right now, and better than if it had not been disturbed." When he reached his headquarters that same night, he informed the members of his staff as he dismounted from his horse: "Gentlemen, the order will be revoked tomorrow."

How did Grant explain his surrender? He telegraphed General Halleck to state that he had changed the order because Smith's appointment to full command of all the troops in Butler's department would put "a third army in the field." Grant's message to Halleck explains nothing; it was the first of a series of pitiful evasions.

Grant made another explanation to General James H. Wilson, Smith's close friend and admirer, commander of a cavalry division with the Army of the Potomac, and a former member of Grant's staff. When Wilson inquired as to the reason for Smith's dismissal, Grant replied that Smith "had been too free in his criticisms and had made it necessary

that he should be relieved, or that Meade, Burnside and Butler should be deprived of command and sent out of the army." This likewise explains nothing; whatever difficulty had been caused by Smith's criticism of Meade, Burnside, and Butler was well-known to Grant on July 1st, when he wrote to Halleck saying that Butler was unfit for a command, praising the great abilities of Smith, and saying he would feel strengthened if Smith were in command of the right wing of his army.

A year after his relief, Smith wrote to Grant to say that he had heard that his former commander had attributed his dismissal to the fact that he was forming a cabal against Grant and intrigued to get him deposed from his command. Smith stated that, although he now made no pretensions to friendly feelings, he was extremely anxious that Grant should not entertain any suspicion that he had ever acted in a deceitful manner. To this letter Grant replied through a member of his staff: "General Grant has received your letter, and he wishes me to say that he has never accused you of being in a cabal for his displacement, and also in reference to your being relieved, that it came from the impossibility of your getting along with General Butler; of the two you being the junior."

In view of the many different excuses given for the revocation of the famous order and the dismissal of Smith, we must inevitably conclude that Grant never revealed the truth. What was the real reason? According to Smith, Butler threatened to expose his commander's recent intoxication. In a letter written to Senator Solomon Foote of Vermont and published without Smith's knowledge or consent, Smith said that about the last of June or the first of July Grant and Butler came to his headquarters; shortly after their arrival, Grant turned to Butler and said, "That drink of whiskey I took has done me good," and asked Smith for a drink. Smith's servant opened a bottle for him. At this time Smith knew that Grant had within six months pledged himself to drink no liquor, but says he did not feel it would "better matters to decline to give it upon his re-

quest in Butler's presence." After the lapse of an hour or less, Grant asked for another drink. Shortly thereafter, his voice showed plainly that the liquor had affected him, and after a little time he departed. Smith went out to see him upon his horse; as soon as he returned to his tent he informed a staff officer who had witnessed Grant's departure: "General Grant had gone away drunk. General Butler has seen it, and will never fail to use the weapon which has been put into his hands."

Such is Smith's explanation of Grant's peremptory revocation of Order 225. General Isaac J. Wistar of Philadelphia, who commanded a brigade in one of Smith's corps divisions, made a still more serious charge against Butler. Writing to Smith in January of 1893, almost thirty years after the event, Wistar said that the then Assistant Secretary of War, John Tucker, had told him that Butler not only saw Grant intoxicated and threatened him with exposure, but, still worse, contrived to get him drunk and induced him to accompany him on a visit to several headquarters. There, on the pretext of indisposition, Grant partook of liquor until he was so under its influence that he had to be helped from his horse on his return to his own headquarters. Smith reports that Rawlins, Grant's chief of staff, happened to come out of his tent at the time, and exclaimed, "My God, there is the General drunk again after all the promises I got from the four commanders."

Knowing that Grant had pledged himself to Rawlins not to drink, Smith wrote to Rawlins to say that he had seen Grant drinking in the presence of Butler. Rawlins replied, thanking him for his "friendly forethought and interest" and adding, "Being thus advised of the slippery ground he is on, I shall not fail to use my utmost efforts to keep him from falling."

Butler himself denied that Grant drank that day at his headquarters, and said he had never seen Grant take a glass of spirituous liquor; he had seen him drink wine at the dinner table, but nowhere else. This statement is not consonant with Butler's subsequent statement to Senator



Hoar that he could prove Grant had been drunk on seven different occasions.

Smith was convinced that Butler threatened Grant with exposure of his drunkenness if the order relieving him were not revoked. "I was convinced," he says, "that General Butler had used his knowledge of the fact that General Grant, under the pressure of the great burden which he was carrying, had temporarily become the victim of a habit which at one time disqualified him for command, to force him to act against his judgment and inclination." There can be no doubt that at this time Grant lapsed into his old habit of intemperance; this is further confirmed by letters which Rawlins wrote to his wife expressing great sorrow and distress that Grant was "deviating from the true path."

When Smith's book *From Chattanooga to Petersburg* was published in 1893, General C. B. Comstock, an engineer officer on Grant's staff, made a reply in which he denied that Grant had been influenced by any threat from Butler when he reversed Order No. 225. He explained Smith's dismissal on the ground of Grant's anger at Smith's severe criticism of Meade for his management of the Army of the Potomac in the Battle of Cold Harbor. According to Comstock, Grant felt that Smith was attacking him indirectly through Meade; after the interview with Smith, Grant informed Comstock that he had never been so outraged.

This much is certain. After his interview with Butler, Grant revoked the order issued three days before. There is no doubt that Grant acted under the influence of some threat from Butler, and that Butler had some ascendancy over his superior. The evidence would seem to indicate that the weapon with which Butler threatened Grant was the proof of his drunkenness. Whatever the nature of his knowledge, Butler made full use of it to restore himself to power and retain his post in the army.

It might be asked why, if Butler had such a hold on Grant, he did not make use of it when he was finally dismissed from the army in January of 1865. The answer is that the dismissal came soon after Butler's disgraceful fail-

ure in the attack on Fort Fisher, which made glaringly apparent his unfitness for military command. Moreover, the situation in the country and in the campaign against the Confederacy was vastly different in January of 1865 from that which obtained six months previously. In July of 1864, Grant's fortunes were at a low ebb. The first campaign against Lee had ended in the bloody repulse and slaughter in the woods at Cold Harbor. "Grant, the Butcher" was pilloried in the newspapers, and the morale of the Army of the Potomac was lower than at any time in its splendid history. Moreover, in the Fall of that year, Sheridan in the Valley of Virginia, Thomas at Nashville, and Sherman in Georgia had won great victories for the Union cause; Lincoln had been re-elected; and the fall of the Confederacy was imminent. No threat of Butler's could now unseat Grant.

After his dismissal from the Army of the Potomac, Smith's friends endeavored to obtain for him the command of a corps in the Department of the Gulf, where he was then serving under General Canby. Grant put a stop to this on February 20th, 1865 when he wrote: "It will not do for Canby to risk Smith with any military command whatever. The moment Canby should differ with him in judgment as to what is to be done, and he would be obliged to differ or yield to him entirely, he would get no further service out of him; but, on the contrary, he would be a clog. Let Smith continue on the same duty he has been detailed for." Grant was never willing to trust a subordinate whom he had once relieved. Badeau states:

"He bore with a man whose characteristics would have been intolerable with some superiors, and put up with even ill-success or insubordination, sometimes too long; but if once he determined to free himself from an incompetent, or inefficient, or unmanageable lieutenant, he never relented, nor was willing to be embarrassed by the same cause again."

Thus it came about that "Baldy" Smith, perhaps the finest military mind in the Union armies, to whose extraor-

dinary abilities the leading generals of the army paid high tribute, and whose genius at Chattanooga had "saved an army and directed it to victory from a subordinate position," saw the curtain fall on the drama of the Civil War in an inconspicuous post in the Department of the Gulf.

General James H. Wilson, who knew him perhaps better than any other officer in the army, and who likewise knew Grant well, thus summarizes the story:

"Of William F. Smith it may be truthfully said that he made his best friends among the cadets he taught and the subordinates he commanded, not one of whom ever deserted him in trouble or adversities, denied the greatness of his talents, or questioned the elevation of his character. His troubles and differences were always with those above him, never with those under his command."

History is never made with an *If*; neither can it be written with an *If*. Nevertheless, there are sound reasons for believing that if Grant had carried out his original purpose, and put "Baldy" Smith, whom he considered perhaps the ablest strategist, at the head of the Army of the Potomac, or, failing that, had put him on his staff and charged him with the responsibility of working out the plans of the campaign, there would have been no bloody tragedy of Second Cold Harbor, no Petersburg Mine fiasco, and the objectives of the Army of the Potomac, the destruction of Lee's army and the winning of the peace, would have been attained in a much shorter time and with far less cost in treasure, blood, and suffering.

Shortly after Smith had been relieved from service with the Army of the Potomac, Charles A. Dana, his close friend and admirer who had been at Grant's headquarters when Butler secured the revocation of the order which would have relieved him, wrote him these significant words:

"I regret more even than you do perhaps, that you are consigned to inaction. If I had any say, it would not last an hour longer. But yet I think you are somewhat responsible for it yourself, and it seems to me a pretty grave responsibility. . . . I won't scold about what is after

all a constitutional peculiarity; but you will at least let me tell you of it in all friendship and frankness. If instead of running athwart the idiosyncrasies of those in controlling places, you had held your tongue and flung away your pen, I am sure your friends would have not cherished you with any warmer affection, but all your power of usefulness would have been in constant action and the country would have been immensely the gainer."<sup>1</sup>

Smith's unpublished autobiography embodies striking appraisals of leading generals of the Union armies with, or under whom, he served during the war. Although he gave the highest place to Thomas, he did not accord him rank among history's great generals: "Thomas, whom I liked personally and officially, could never hope to go down in history with the great captains. I should put Thomas as about on a par with Washington; safe but not brilliant; making up by tenacity and industry for lack of great ability; and always ready to take any responsibility for any move which commended itself to his judgment." Like many students of war, Smith ranked Thomas far above Sherman in military achievement and ability and praised him for accepting a post under Sherman when Grant put the latter in command of the three armies which marched against Atlanta.

Smith thus characterized Halleck: "He has some good administrative qualities and did some good work in his civil military administration in Missouri, probably saving that state after the fool Frémont had nearly wrecked our chances there." In another comment on Halleck, however, he speaks of his appointment as general-in-chief of all the Union armies and his departure to "ornament the headquarters of the army by a figure with about the real knowledge of his profession possessed by the old Aztec idol in a temple, and who caused about the same amount of bloodshed during his reign. The blunders in strategy, position, and battles were disgusting."

---

<sup>1</sup> William F. Smith papers.

Don Carlos Buell he rated as "a capital soldier and a student in his profession. He fought a battle with courage, coolness and intelligence, saving us from utter rout at Shiloh, into which false position Halleck's ambition and Grant's density had begotten us." Of McClellan, with whom he had had such intimacy, and for whom he retained a deep affection to the end of his life, Smith said: "McClellan had no moral spine, and caved in and grumbled at his superiors, instead of standing out and fighting them to a finish. He was also timid from a too heavy appreciation of the responsibility resting on him." He entertained a very high opinion of his classmate and roommate at West Point, the able but unfortunate Fitz-John Porter, and of General W. B. Franklin. Of Rosecrans he wrote:

"Rosecrans was a real study. He was able, with a rapid working mind, capable at times of efforts requiring determination of character. But while many plans of action came into his head, he was not usually persistent in any, having generally some new plan which he would think better than a previous one. He was vain; thought that he had won a great victory at Chickamauga, and was fond of catching groups of soldiers and making stump speeches to them with a dash of politics infused. He was optimistic to such a degree that I am convinced he expected his military record would carve a way for him to the White House; and I think the same quality blinded him to the peril his army was in at Chattanooga."

Smith's estimate of Burnside is revealed by the following incident. After the terrible repulse on the hills of Fredericksburg, where Smith commanded a corps in Franklin's Grand Division, he visited Burnside's headquarters to find him pacing up and down in the room, bemoaning the slaughter of his men on the hills across the Rappahannock, and exclaiming, "Oh, those men over there! Oh, those men over there!" Suddenly he broke off his lamentation; for no discernible reason, he referred to his generals: "Do you know what I do when you fellows all get away from here at night?" When Smith admitted ignorance, Burnside said, "I call Robert in here and have a long talk with him, certain that

I shall get honest opinions." Robert was a slave whom Burnside had brought with him from New Mexico and had taught to run the engines in his gun factory at Bristol, Rhode Island. When the war broke out, he became Burnside's cook. Smith speaks of him as "a long, gaunt Negro with a strong face, honest and faithful as human beings can be, and a servant who would willingly have laid down his life for Burnside. I did not doubt that Robert's advice was always honestly given; but I never, after that, entered into competition with him in the bestowal of it."

This was his final judgment of Grant, whose confidence he shared for a time, and who had expressed so high an opinion of Smith's ability that he planned to put him at the head of the Army of the Potomac:

"I have never changed my opinion of Grant's mental powers and professional requirements since I measured him at Chattanooga. Ability ordinary; sense of responsibility, utterly wanting, except so far as his personal interests were concerned; professional acquirements absolutely wanting, so far as related to the direction of movements and conduct of battles, as shown at Belmont, Fort Donelson, Shiloh, the Mississippi campaign from Halleck's exit to the crossing of the Mississippi River below Vicksburg, the battle of Chattanooga and the campaign of '64 and '65, all of which is plainly shown in the record. He was malignant in his hatred, but would forgive for a consideration; *vide* Butler, while Grant was president; also Lew Wallace. Utter disregard of truth where his own interests were concerned; the moral qualities drowned in rot-gut whiskey."

Reading these biting comments of Smith on some of the chief commanders of the Union armies, one understands what Charles A. Dana meant when he wrote to Smith after his dismissal, "If you had neither been able to speak nor write, I have no doubt that you would now have been in command of one of the great armies, rendering invaluable service to the cause and making for yourself an imperishable name."

## Grant and McClelland

**I**n the Fall of 1862, Admiral David D. Porter, who had just been appointed flag officer with the title of Acting Rear Admiral, had a conference with Lincoln about the campaign against Vicksburg and the winning of the Mississippi. Porter told the President that there was a time when Vicksburg could have been easily captured, but that it was now a second Gibraltar and that the navy alone could do nothing toward capturing it.

“Well,” said Lincoln, “who do you think is the general for such an occasion?”

“General Grant, sir,” answered Porter. “Vicksburg is within his department; but I presume he will send Sherman there, who is equal to any occasion.”

“Well, Admiral,” said the President, “I have in mind a better general than either of them; that is McClelland, an old and intimate friend of mine.”

Although Grant had won the battle of Fort Donelson and the bloody battle of Shiloh, Lincoln still regarded McClelland as an abler general than either Grant or Sherman. This was the McClelland whom, after almost two years' association in the campaigns of the Mississippi Valley, Grant described to Halleck as “entirely unfit for the position of a corps commander, both on the march and on the battle field. Looking after his corps gives me more

labor and infinitely more uneasiness than all the remainder of my department.”

McClermand was one of the so-called “political” generals of the Civil War; others prominent in this category were Butler of Massachusetts, Frank Blair of Missouri, and John Logan of Illinois. All four were strong personalities, ardent patriots, and outstanding political leaders. As an independent commander, McClermand had the opportunity to prove his ability only in the expedition against Arkansas Post in December of 1862. However brilliant, much of the success of this campaign was due to the presence and help of Sherman and Admiral Porter. McClermand was a tough fighter—he proved that at Donelson, Shiloh, and Vicksburg—but he was unruly and disrespectful as a subordinate.

In every great war there are personal tragedies in which men of great ability, sometimes through a mistake of their own, sometimes through unhappy relationship with their superior officers, sometimes through government interference, and sometimes because they fall into popular disfavor, end their military careers in disappointment and sorrow. One of those tragedies in the Civil War was that of Don Carlos Buell, who brought his Army of the Ohio to Grant’s rescue at Shiloh, fought the bloody battle of Perryville in Kentucky, fell into disfavor with Halleck and the administration, and was relieved. Subsequently he was offered important commands, partly at Grant’s suggestion, which he refused because a military commission appointed at his request, although failing to convict him of misconduct or incompetence, refused to make public its findings.

Another tragedy was that of Meade, who fought and won the greatest battle of the war on Pennsylvania soil only to pass into eclipse. Another was that of Warren, the able and gifted commander of the Fifth Corps of the Army of the Potomac, who was cursed out of his command by Sheridan at the Battle of Five Forks and who felt his hurt so deeply that he left a request that the flag which he had served so nobly should not be draped about his coffin after his death. Another was that of General C. P. Stone, who com-



manded at the Ball's Bluff disaster in October of 1861. He was suspected by New England soldiers and politicians of favoring slavery and condemned by false reports that he had returned fugitive slaves to their masters. Stanton ordered his arrest, and he was confined at Fort Lafayette in New York for one hundred and eighty-nine days without trial. Another tragedy was that of the brilliant Fitz-John Porter, one of McClellan's chief lieutenants, who was charged with, and found guilty of, disobedience, disloyalty, and misconduct under Pope in the second battle of Bull Run, and cashiered from the army. He was forced to wait until 1886 for justice in the form of reappointment as a colonel of infantry in the Regular Army. Still another was that of John C. Frémont, the gallant pathfinder and the first standard-bearer of the Republican Party, who commanded for a time in the Mississippi Valley until his untimely emancipation proclamation and his feud with the influential Blairs led to his dismissal. Yet another tragedy was that of W. F. Smith, the ablest military mind in the army who, after brilliant service with Grant at Chattanooga, was dismissed from his corps in Virginia at the time of his quarrel with Butler.

McClellan has a place in this list of the personal tragedies of the Civil War. When a man's history is written by his enemies, we must always take that fact into consideration in forming an opinion. We see McClellan as he is sketched for us by Sherman, Horace Porter, Dana, McPherson, Wilson, and Grant, all of whom disliked him and some of whom hated him. Lincoln's appointment placed him in a position during the Vicksburg campaign which inevitably made his relationship with Grant a most unhappy one. He also labored under the opposition of the so-called "Grant Men," who constantly conspired to have him dismissed.

John McClellan was born near Hardinsburg, Kentucky on May 30th, 1812. When still a child, he moved with his family to Illinois and attended the village school at Shawneetown. After the death of his father, a physician

educated at the University of Edinburgh, he helped to support his mother and studied law with a local lawyer. He was admitted to the bar in 1832; before entering on his profession, he served in the Black Hawk War, traded on the Mississippi River, and edited *The Gallatin Democrat and Illinois Advertiser*.

McClermand served in the state legislature as a Democrat for a number of years, and in Congress from 1843 to 1851 and from 1859 to 1861. As a strong anti-abolitionist, he was a prominent figure in Congress, and for a time followed Douglas. He was an orator of considerable ability, as may be seen from his oration on Andrew Jackson: "Like Aristides, he could have written unmoved the ballot of his own ostracism; or watched untempted, by the flickering torches of night, over the treasures which strewed the field of Plataea." After the battle of Bull Run, McClermand offered a resolution in Congress to spend all the men and money necessary to save the Union; he then relinquished his legislative post to take a brigadier-general's commission. His first engagement was the battle of Belmont, where he served with great gallantry; Grant, however, was provoked when he credited the victory to the division under his command. Lincoln, who sent no word to Grant, was greatly pleased with McClermand's performance and wrote him a special letter of thanks and congratulation which read in part:

"This is not an official, but a social letter. You have had a battle, and without being able to judge as to the precise measure of its value, I think it is safe to say that you and all with you have done honor to yourselves and the flag and service to the country. Most gratefully do I thank you and them. In my present position I must care for the whole nation. But I hope it will be no injustice to any other state for me to indulge a little home pride that Illinois does not disappoint us."

McClermand led the advance of Grant's army in the successful expedition against Fort Henry and played a gallant part in the capture of Fort Donelson. When the

Confederate Army made its sortie from the fort, its chief weight fell on McClelland's division which, together with the troops of Lew Wallace, was driven back, opening the road to Nashville. When Grant appeared on the scene, he perceived the danger and observed quietly to Wallace and McClelland: "Gentlemen, the position on the right must be retaken." McClelland, Wallace, and the heroic C. F. Smith then mounted the charge which invested the fort and set Grant's star of destiny in the heavens. The results of this battle, his strong political influence in Illinois, and the gallantry and fighting ability which he had displayed at Belmont and Donelson, all resulted in McClelland's appointment as a Major-General of Volunteers; in the West, only Halleck and Grant outranked him. On the bloody field of Shiloh, where for a time the fate of the Union Army and the future of Grant hung in the balance, McClelland's division, together with that of Sherman and most of the Union Army, was swept back by the Confederate attack almost into the Tennessee River. Like Sherman, McClelland fought courageously and with great spirit and emerged from the battle with enhanced prestige. Indeed, he was able to persuade many, including Lincoln, that he had played the leading part in snatching victory from what for a time appeared to be disaster and disgrace.

Some days before the battle of Shiloh, McClelland had written to Grant, who had his headquarters on the river at Savannah, to come up to Shiloh, pitch his headquarters on the field, and see that his forces were properly disposed. This doubtless was a hint to Grant not to repeat the mistake he had made at Donelson by absenting himself from the field of action during the crisis of the battle. In the Fall of that year of 1862, McClelland's ambitions took him to Washington, where he informed his fellow townsman, Lincoln, of the growing discontent of the farmers and cattlegrowers of the Middle West at their inability to float their grain and cattle down the Mississippi; he also reported that many residents of the Mississippi Valley resented the injection of the slavery issue into the conflict. "Copper-

heads" were lifting up their heads and loudly demanding the negotiation of a peace with the South. McClernand told Lincoln that the only thing which could prevent further alienation of sentiment in that area was an aggressive campaign to take Vicksburg and open the river. Impressed by this argument, Lincoln gave McClernand authority to raise troops in Indiana, Illinois, and Iowa and command them in an expedition against Vicksburg.

When Lincoln talked with Admiral Porter, and told him that he had in mind as commander for the expedition against Vicksburg a better general than either Grant or Sherman, and that his name was McClernand, Porter said, "I don't know him, Mr. President."

"What!" exclaimed Lincoln, "Why, he saved the battle of Shiloh when the case seemed hopeless."

"Why! Mr. President," replied Porter, "the general impression is that Grant won the battle of Shiloh. As he commanded the army, he would seem entitled to the credit."

"No," said Lincoln, "McClernand did it. He is a natural born general."

"Well, Mr. President," replied Porter, "with all due deference to you, I don't believe in natural born generals, except where they have had proper military training, and it seems to me the siege of Vicksburg is too important a matter to trust to anybody except a scientific military man. Besides, if you take troops from Grant and Sherman to give them to McClernand, you will weaken the army."

"Oh, no," said Lincoln, "I don't mean to do that. McClernand is to go to Springfield, Illinois, and raise troops there for the capture of Vicksburg. In the meantime you can prepare to co-operate with him."

Lincoln then gave Porter a note of introduction to McClernand, who was in Washington, and instructed him to call and talk the proposed expedition over with him. At this meeting, McClernand informed Porter that he had already received authority to enlist an army at Springfield, Illinois and command it at the siege of Vicksburg. When Porter talked with Assistant Secretary of the Navy Fox

after this interview with McClernand, Fox said to him, "Well, what do you think of General McClernand?"

"I could form no opinion of him," said Porter. "Good-bye."

"Are you not going to see the President again before you leave Washington?" inquired Fox.

"No," said Porter, "I leave for Cairo, Illinois, in two hours, to see Grant."

The word that Porter brought to Grant about McClernand and the proposed expedition against Vicksburg was the first definite information that Grant received on that subject. Porter was determined that Grant should start an expedition and take Vicksburg if possible before McClernand raised his army.

Although a fellow townsman and acquaintance of Lincoln, McClernand and the President were never intimate friends but rather long-time political opponents. After the death of Stephen Douglas, with the possible exception of Logan, there was "no Democrat in Illinois who could bring such a decided and valuable support to the Union cause as McClernand, and there was none who entered into the war with more of zeal and loyalty." Military historians are apt to overlook the importance of the political situation.

Lincoln undoubtedly created an unfortunate, and possibly dangerous, situation in giving McClernand a commission under a commanding general to whom he was personally objectionable; it was equally regrettable that the nature of the commission was such as to bring about a misunderstanding of the division of authority between the two men. In his order issued on October 21st, 1862, Lincoln directed McClernand to proceed to the states of Indiana, Illinois, and Iowa, raise and organize troops, and forward them to Memphis, Cairo, and other points; when a sufficient force "not required by the operations of General Grant's command shall be raised, an expedition may be organized under General McClernand's command against Vicksburg, and to clear the Mississippi River and open navigation to New Orleans."

Lincoln added to the order an endorsement in which he said that, while the order was marked "confidential," McClernand could show it "to governors and even others, when in his discretion he believed so doing to be indispensable to the progress of the expedition." To the credit of General Halleck, the general-in-chief, it is to be said that he opposed McClernand's scheme as long as he could; Lincoln's influence, however, prevailed, and McClernand set out on his expedition. It was not until the 18th of December that Grant received official notice that McClernand was to have charge of the expedition. On that day word came from Washington: "It is the wish of the President that General McClernand's corps shall constitute a part of the river expedition, and that he shall have the immediate command under your direction."

When Porter returned from Washington and assumed command of the Mississippi Squadron at Cairo in October of 1862, he lost no time in communicating with General Grant to offer his co-operation in any enterprise. From the same source Grant learned for the first time that McClernand had been given authority to raise troops at Springfield and elsewhere with the object of capturing Vicksburg. Since Porter had not received this information in confidence, he felt obligated to forward it to Grant. Porter met Grant for the first time on board a quartermaster's steamer at Cairo. The two men sat down together at a small table with a roast duck and a bottle of champagne between them. Porter looked earnestly at Grant, trying to fathom how much ability was hidden beneath this plain and ordinary exterior; Grant examined Porter to see how much real capacity for work lay under all the gilt buttons and gold lace with which the Navy Department had bedizened his coat.

Grant said at once to Porter, "Admiral, what is all this you have been writing me?" Porter then gave him an account of his interview with Lincoln and McClernand. When he heard this, Grant said to him, "When can you move with your gunboats, and what force have you?"

"I can move tomorrow," answered Porter, "with all the old gunboats, and five or six other vessels."

"Well, then," said Grant, "I will leave you now and write at once to Sherman to have thirty thousand infantry and artillery embarked in transports ready to start for Vicksburg the moment you get to Memphis." Thus Grant, Porter, and Sherman conspired to forestall McClelland in the capture of Vicksburg. Grant's action was completely justified, not only by his lack of confidence in McClelland, but because he had as yet received no official notice that McClelland was to command the expedition.

As soon as Porter's gunboats reached Memphis, he and Sherman moved up the Yazoo River above Vicksburg to Chickasaw Bayou; there Sherman met with a bloody repulse at Haynes Bluff in what was the first attack on Vicksburg on the 29th of December, 1862. In the meantime, however, Grant had received official notice from Halleck that McClelland was to command the expedition personally. When this word reached Grant on December 18th, he immediately notified McClelland, who was then at Springfield, Illinois. This message was held up by a Confederate cavalry raid which for a time cut Grant's communication between his headquarters and the North; the interruption delayed McClelland's arrival at Memphis until after Sherman's unsuccessful assault of December 29th.

Sherman was greatly depressed by his repulse at Haynes Bluff. When he met Porter on the latter's flagship, he sat down and remained silent for some time. At length Porter remarked: "You are out of sorts. What is the matter?"

"I have lost seventeen hundred men, and those infernal reporters will publish all over the country their ridiculous stories about Sherman being whipped, etc."

"Only seventeen hundred men!" answered Porter. "Pshaw! that is nothing! Simply an episode in the war. You'll lose seventeen thousand before the war is over and will think nothing of it. We'll have Vicksburg yet before we die. Steward, bring some punch for the general and myself."

"That is good sense, Porter," exclaimed Sherman, "and I am glad to see you are not disheartened. But what shall we do now? I must take my boys somewhere and wipe this out."

When Porter expressed his readiness to accompany him anywhere, Sherman said, "Then let's go and thresh out Arkansas Post," which was a Confederate fort forty miles up the Arkansas River in Arkansas. Before they could start on this expedition, however, McClernand arrived on the scene with authority to supersede Sherman. Sherman despised McClernand, but submitted with military propriety. Writing to his brother John, he said: "Mr. Lincoln intended to insult me and the military profession by putting McClernand over me, and I would have quietly folded up my things and gone to St. Louis. Only I know in times like these all must submit to insult and infamy if necessary."

Soon after his arrival, McClernand met with Sherman and Porter on the latter's flagship. In answer to Porter's inquiry as to whether he had brought with him siege tools to insure the fall of Vicksburg, McClernand replied, "No; but I find this army in a most demoralized state, and I must do something to raise their spirits."

This statement provoked Porter to inquire, "Then, sir, you take command of this army?"

"Certainly," replied McClernand, "and if you will let me have some of your gunboats, I propose to proceed immediately and capture Arkansas Post!"

In his account of this meeting, Porter wrote that McClernand did not know the difference "between an ironclad and a tinclad. He had heard that gunboats had taken Fort Henry and that was all he knew about them." At this point in the interview McClernand made what Porter considered a discourteous reply to something Sherman had said; Sherman left the conference and walked into the after-cabin. Porter then told McClernand that he and Sherman had already discussed an expedition against Arkansas Post, that he would not let the gunboats go unless he himself accompanied them, and that he would not proceed unless Sherman



were in command of the troops. At that moment Sherman, who had overheard Porter's remarks, beckoned to him from the other cabin. When Porter came in, Sherman exclaimed: "Admiral, how could you make such a remark to McClelland? He hates me already and you have made him an enemy for life."

"I don't care who or what he is," said Porter. "He shall not be rude to you in my cabin."

When Porter returned to McClelland, he found him "deeply engaged in studying out a chart, making believe he was interested, in order to conceal his temper." However, when they discussed the matter again, McClelland agreed to have Sherman go along in command of the troops.

The attack on Arkansas Post on January 11th was a brilliant success; five thousand prisoners and seventeen pieces of cannon fell into the hands of the victors. McClelland lost about a thousand men killed, wounded, and missing. He was in great spirits after the victory and said repeatedly to Sherman, "Glorious! Glorious! My star is ever in the ascendant! . . . I'll make a splendid report . . . I had a man up a tree."

McClelland's joy was soon clouded by an order from Grant directing him to return at once to the Mississippi. Grant did not know that Sherman had first suggested the attack on Arkansas Post, and felt that it was a waste of time and effort. Moreover, at the time he gave this order, Grant had not learned of the expedition's success and mistakenly telegraphed Halleck that McClelland had "gone on a wild goose chase to the post of Arkansas." To this dispatch Halleck replied that the government would support Grant in his every move and request. "You are hereby authorized," wired Halleck, "to relieve General McClelland from command of the expedition against Vicksburg, giving it to the next in rank, or taking it yourself."

McClelland replied to Grant in an angry message, saying that he took the responsibility for the expedition against Arkansas Post and had anticipated Grant's approval, rather than his condemnation, of the complete and signal success

which crowned it. McClelland accused Grant of insuring the failure of the first expedition against Vicksburg by his retreat from Oxford, Mississippi, and stated that he would have felt himself guilty of laxity had he remained idle and inactive at Milliken's Bend: "The officer who in the present state of the country will not assume a proper responsibility to save it is unworthy of public trust."

This was the first of many bitter and unhappy exchanges between the ambitious Illinois general and his superior. McClelland now began to appeal to Lincoln. He enclosed the letter he had written to Grant after the action at Arkansas Post with his own letter to the President in which he said: "I believe my success here is gall and wormwood to the clique of West Pointers who have been persecuting me for months. How can you expect success when men controlling military destinies of the country are more chagrined at the success of your volunteer officers than the very enemy beaten by the latter in battle . . . Do not let me be clandestinely destroyed, or, what is worse, dismissed without a hearing."

Up to the time of his clash with Grant during the Vicksburg campaign, McClelland seems to have had no strong prejudice against him; as late as November 10th, 1862, he wrote to Stanton, the Secretary of War, saying that if the proposed Vicksburg expedition did not eventuate, he would prefer to serve with Grant's army than anywhere else. On the 17th of January Grant visited McClelland and his command at Napoleon, at the mouth of the Arkansas River. He had received urgent messages from Sherman and Porter expressing their distrust of McClelland and urging him to come and take command in person. Grant found that McClelland was profoundly distrusted by both the army and the navy; in his opinion, the feeling was so great that "it would have been criminal to send troops under these circumstances into such a danger." Although Grant would have felt more confident and at ease with Sherman in command, he felt that McClelland's rank and ambition made it impossible to supersede him. The only solution of the

difficulty was to take command himself. Grant arrived at Young's Point on January 29th, 1863, and assumed command the following day.

McClelland took exception to Grant's action and protested it strongly. In an angry letter in answer to some instruction he had received from Grant to adjust complaints in connection with the 54th Indiana Volunteers, McClelland said: "The enforcement of your order will be the subversion of my authority at the instance of an inferior, who deserves to be arrested for his indirection and spirit of insubordination." McClelland then went on to protest against orders being issued from Grant's headquarters directly to the different army corps commanders and not through him: "As I am invested by order of the Secretary of War, endorsed by the President, and by order of the President with the command of all the forces operating on the Mississippi River, I claim that all orders affecting the condition or operation of those forces should pass through these headquarters." He concluded by saying: "If different views are entertained by you, then the question should be immediately referred to Washington and one or other or both of us relieved. One thing is certain: two generals cannot command this army, issuing independent and direct orders to subordinate officers, and the public service be promoted."

When he received definite orders from Grant relieving him from the command of the Mississippi River Expedition and circumscribing his command to the Thirteenth Army Corps, McClelland wrote Grant that he would acquiesce in order to avoid a conflict of authority in the presence of the enemy. However, he stated his desire to protest this injustice and requested that his protests be forwarded to the general-in-chief, and through him to the Secretary of War and the President. When he forwarded the correspondence to Halleck, Grant said that if Sherman had been left in command, he would not have thought his presence at the front necessary. "But whether I do injustice to General McClelland or not, I have no confidence in his ability as a

soldier to conduct an expedition of the magnitude of this successfully. In this opinion I have no doubt but that I am borne out by a majority of the officers of the expedition; though I have not questioned one of them on the subject."

A reading of McClelland's angry correspondence with Grant cannot fail to instill a degree of sympathy. He justly felt that the government was indulging in double dealing with him. When McClelland set out to raise the troops for the expedition in Illinois, Iowa, and Indiana, it was undoubtedly with the assurance that he was to have command when that expedition attacked Vicksburg. Grant acted wisely and courageously in assuming command himself; it would have been a misfortune, in view of the feeling against McClelland among the high officers of the army, to have left him in charge. Nevertheless, he was the victim of an unfortunate circumstance and felt, not without reason, that he had been betrayed into the hands of his enemies.

Military methods, strategy, and tactics have changed greatly since the days of the Civil War. Today it seems almost incredible that Lincoln, despite political considerations, should have given McClelland what that officer considered an independent commission to take Vicksburg while operating in an area which was under Grant's command. It would have been an analogous case if, during World War I, President Wilson had commissioned Theodore Roosevelt to raise an army of Rough Riders and had sent him across the Atlantic with the purpose of attacking a certain sector of the German lines while emancipating him from the control and immediate direction of General Pershing. It is true that subsequent orders made it clear that McClelland was under the general authority of Grant; it is equally true that his authority to lead the command in the attack against Vicksburg had never been revoked. If Grant on coming to Vicksburg had retained general command, while placing the whole Army of the Tennessee under McClelland, (just as the Army of the Potomac was under the command of Meade in the Virginia campaigns of 1864 and 1865), McClelland could have had no complaint. Indeed, that was

what he demanded of Grant when he protested against having his authority limited to the Thirteenth Corps. Such an arrangement would doubtless have proved disastrous at Vicksburg, even with Grant there to offset some of the blunders which would have occurred. Lincoln's appointment of McClernand was fraught with great danger to the Union cause; it was one of the three chief military blunders of his administration. The second was the dispatch of a large part of the troops upon which McClellan relied in his Peninsula campaign against Richmond on a futile chase after Stonewall Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley. The third was the recall of McClellan's army from the Peninsula after the Seven Days' battle.

As the campaign against Vicksburg gathered momentum, Charles A. Dana came to Grant's headquarters as the special representative of the War Department and Stanton. His chief commission was to keep Stanton and the government informed as to General Grant, his character, habits, and management of the army. Dana had narrowly observed McClernand and had listened to his criticism of Sherman and other high officers. He sized him up as "a man of a good deal of a certain kind of talent; not of a high order; but not one of intellectual accomplishments. His education was that that a man gets who is in Congress five or six years. In short, McClernand was merely a smart man, quick, very active minded, but his judgment was not solid, and he looked after himself a good deal."

In Grant's plan of campaign when he marched the troops down the Mississippi and crossed at Grand Gulf to threaten Vicksburg from the rear, the attack on Grand Gulf was entrusted to McClernand. At a meeting of high officers at Grant's headquarters shortly before the army began to move, Sherman, Admiral Porter, and others protested to Grant against this arrangement. Grant said he would not change the plan because McClernand was ambitious for the command; because he was the senior of other corps commanders and was an especial favorite of the President; because the present position of his corps was such

*McClernand not limited to 13th Corps  
He split it into 13th & 15th Corps & called  
it Army of the Mississippi.*

that the advance fell naturally to his lot; and because, in addition, McClernand had espoused the plan from the first, while Sherman had criticized it and doubted its success. Grant said he would have preferred McPherson to have the lead, but that the position of his corps at Lake Providence made that difficult. Dana also took it upon himself to expostulate with Grant and was rebuked therefor by Stanton.

Grant summed up his relationship with McClernand by telling members of his staff who had urged that he be relieved, "I cannot afford to quarrel with the man whom I am obliged to command." Stanton had telegraphed to Dana in answer to the latter's complaints about McClernand: "General Grant has full and absolute authority to enforce his own command and to remove any person who by ignorance, inaction, or any cause interferes with or delays his operations. He has the full confidence of the government; is expected to enforce his authority, and will be firmly and heartily supported; but he will be responsible for any failure to exert his powers. You may communicate this to him."

Dana maintained a running fire on McClernand in his reports to Stanton; his final conclusion was that McClernand did not have the qualities necessary to command even a regiment. To Stanton Dana related that in the movement across the river at Grand Gulf, despite Grant's orders that officers' horses and baggage should be left behind, one of the steamboats had been delayed to carry over McClernand's wife and servants and baggage. Dana further reported that Grant had given orders also that ammunition should not be used except in combat with the enemy, but that McClernand had delayed crossing the river until 4 in the afternoon, when Governor Yates of Illinois made his troops a speech and received a salute of artillery.

On May 22nd Grant, sitting his horse on a hill on the Jackson Road, watched the attack of his army on the entrenchments about Vicksburg; he had reached the conclusion that the assault had failed when he received a

dispatch from McClernand saying he was hard pressed and asking for reinforcements. When he reached Sherman's headquarters, Grant received a second dispatch from McClernand saying he had partly captured two forts and that the "Stars and Stripes were floating over them." Both Sherman and Grant doubted the accuracy of this statement; Sherman held, however, the note was official and must be credited, and offered to renew the assault with his troops. Grant hurried on to McPherson's headquarters, where he received from McClernand a third dispatch of the same import. He then directed McPherson and Sherman to renew the attack, which was repulsed with heavy losses. After receiving this false report from McClernand Grant had determined to relieve him, but changed his mind, concluding that it would be better to leave him in command of his corps until Vicksburg had fallen; thereafter he would ask McClernand to request a leave of absence. Meanwhile, he intended to supervise all of his operations, and would place no reliance on his reports unless otherwise corroborated. The day before the assault which failed, Grant had telegraphed to Halleck that "McClernand was entirely unfit for the position of a corps commander, both on the march and on the battlefield."

Some days before his dismissal, McClernand had written to Grant to complain that many rumors were afloat to the effect that Grant held him responsible for the failure in the assault on Vicksburg, and that he was to be dismissed; he asked Grant to do him justice by correcting these false reports. Grant's only answer was to inquire of McClernand concerning an address which he had issued to his troops. McClernand might have continued in command of his corps until Vicksburg had fallen had it not been for this congratulatory address which he issued to his troops a few days after the unsuccessful assault upon the Vicksburg entrenchments. In this stirring but somewhat flamboyant address, McClernand praised the achievements of his corps and indirectly reflected upon the part played by Sherman's and McPherson's troops. He claimed that if a simultaneous and per-

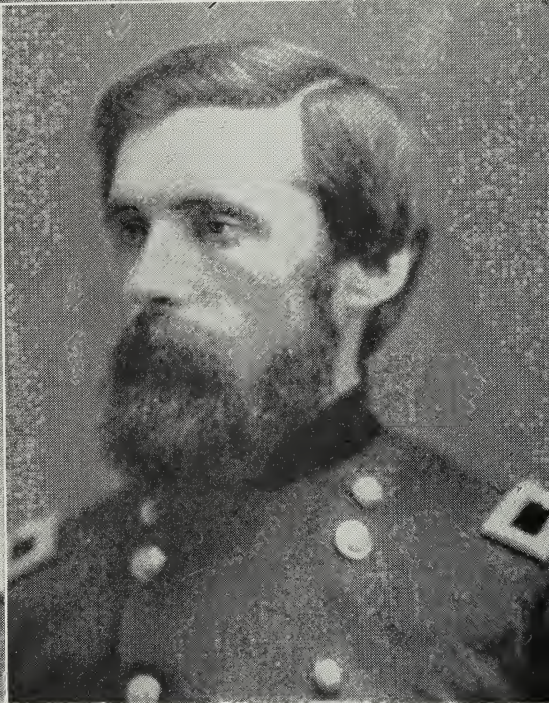
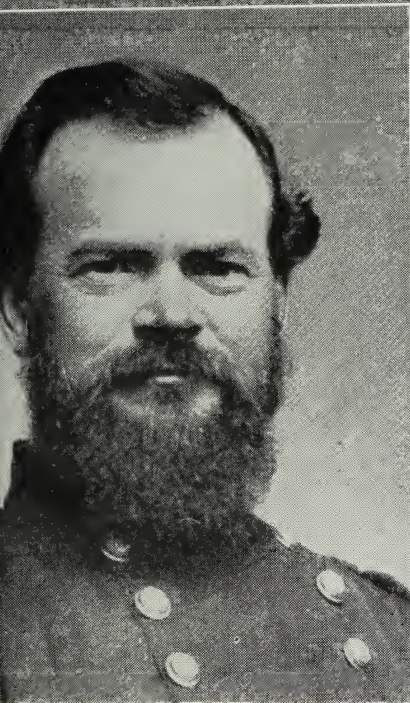
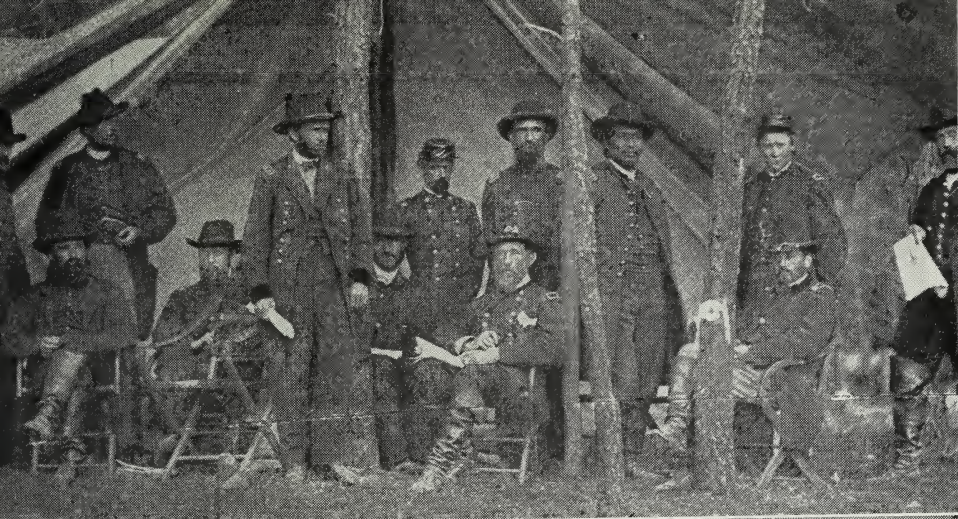
sistent attack had been made at the time he called for it, the Confederate works would have been carried:

“Comrades, you have done much; yet something more remains to be done. The enemy’s odious defenses still block your access to Vicksburg. Treason still rules that rebellious city and closes the Mississippi River against rightful use by the millions who inhabit its sources and the Great Northwest. Shall not our flag float over Vicksburg? Shall not the Great Father of Waters be opened to lawful commerce? Methinks the emphatic response of one and all of you is, It shall be so.”

Grant might have passed over this improper address had it not been for the angry protests which came from Sherman and McPherson, the other corps commanders. A few weeks later a copy of McClernand’s address, published in *The Missouri Democrat* of June 11th, fell into Grant’s hands. He then wrote McClernand asking him if this was a true copy, and if not, to furnish him one at once. McClernand replied that the newspaper account was a correct copy of his order. He regretted that his adjutant had not sent Grant a copy before it was published, and thought that he had done so. As for the message itself, he said: “I am prepared to maintain its statements.”

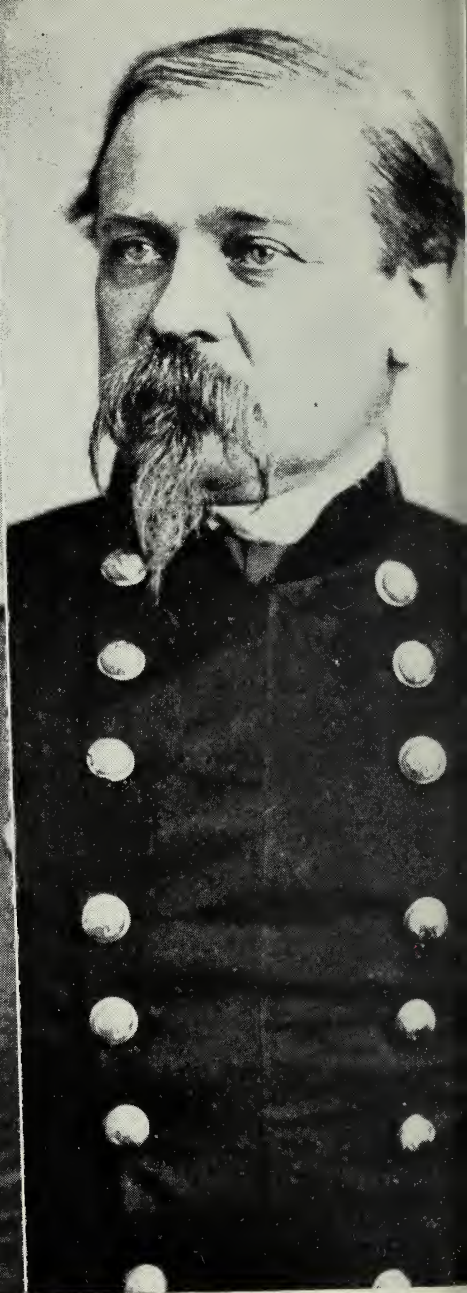
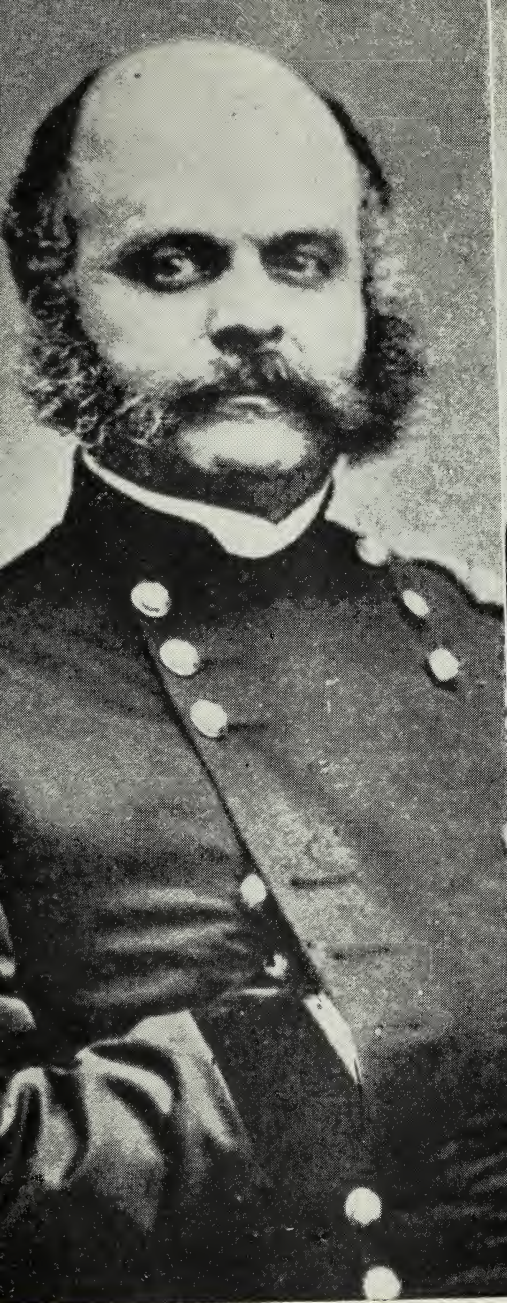
After one of McClernand’s outbursts and acts of insubordination, Grant had said to Wilson, “While I shall not notice this violent outburst, I’ll get rid of McClernand the first chance that I get.” His opportunity had now come; for the technical violation of regulations which forbade the publication of reports and addresses which had not been submitted to the general-in-chief, McClernand was relieved of his command on June 18th and ordered to proceed to “any point in Illinois” and there report to Washington for orders. The congratulatory address and the violation of regulations involved in publishing it was merely the occasion of McClernand’s removal. The real cause was his general insubordination, his incompetence for the duties of a corps commander, and the fact that Grant’s incapacity or death would have catapulted McClernand, who ranked Sher-





*Upper: Grant and His Staff in the Virginia Campaign.*

*Lower left: James B. McPherson who helped Grant achieve success at Vicksburg. Rated second only to Sherman among those who helped Grant to fame, he died in action nine months before the end of the war at the age of 35. Lower right: John A. Rawlins, adjutant to Grant, who called him "indispensable." Rawlins shielded his chief from his greatest temptation, and in return was rewarded with the post of Secretary of War when Grant became President.*



*Left:* Ambrose E. Burnside whose two brilliant military successes were clouded by his failure at the Petersburg crater. Although vindicated by Congress, he left the army and never returned to active service. *Right:* William F. Smith, in many ways the greatest military genius who served Grant. Despite this, Grant dismissed him from command of the Army of the Potomac when he came into conflict with Benjamin Butler.

man and McPherson, into the command of the army. His relationship with the other corps commanders would have made such an event disastrous to the Union cause.

When Grant wrote the order relieving McClernand of his command, his chief of staff, Rawlins, directed Wilson to deliver the order to McClernand early the next morning. Wilson feared that an engagement might break out in the meantime, that McClernand would display his usual dash and courage, and that in consequence Grant might withhold the order; he therefore pressed Rawlins to allow him to deliver it that night. He reached McClernand's headquarters at 2 o'clock, and notified the orderly to rouse the general. When Wilson came in McClernand was seated at his table in full uniform, his sword on the table, and two lighted candles in front of him.

Saluting McClernand, Wilson said, "General, I have an important order for you which I am directed to deliver into your hands, and to see that you read it in my presence, that you understand it, and that you signify your immediate obedience to it." When McClernand opened the envelope and caught the import of the order, he exclaimed, "Well, sir, I am relieved!" And then in the same breath, "By God, sir, we are both relieved!" In this manner McClernand inferred that his influence with the administration was such that he could likewise bring about Grant's removal.

When McClernand returned to his home town, he was accorded the reception due a conquering hero, not a dismissed general. Influential friends were soon at work on his behalf. In replying to Grant's order relieving him, McClernand had said: "Having been appointed by the President to the command of the Corps under a definite act of Congress, I might justly challenge your authority on the premises; but forbear to do so at present." Now, in his appeals to Stanton, Halleck, and Lincoln, McClernand set out to challenge the justice, if not the authority, of Grant's order. It was perhaps unfortunate that Grant had stressed the matter of the technical violation of regulations involved in publishing the address in the papers without first submitting

it to his superior. This gave McClernand an opportunity to telegraph Lincoln, "I have been relieved for an omission of my adjutant." In a letter to Stanton, McClernand denied that his congratulatory address reflected in any way upon the other corps of the army and that its sole motive was to stimulate soldierly pride and conduct in the Thirteenth Corps. Grant's real motive, he told Stanton, involved the personal hostility he had shown him ever since his name had been associated with the Vicksburg expedition. He asked Stanton to investigate his and Grant's conduct as officers from the time of the battle of Belmont to the assault on Vicksburg; he demanded that, pending the results of such an investigation, he be restored to his command, at least until the fall of Vicksburg was achieved.

The powerful governor of Illinois, Richard Yates, wrote to Lincoln describing the great demonstrations with which McClernand had been received at Springfield and the universal regret that he was no longer in command of troops in the field. Lee was then invading Pennsylvania; Yates told Lincoln that if McClernand were supplied with some western troops and were put in command of the Army of the Potomac, "it would inspire great hope and confidence in the Northwest and perhaps throughout the country."

On June 23rd McClernand wrote to his patron, Lincoln, "It is a fine point on which to hinge so cruel and unauthorized an act"; this referred to his dismissal on the ground of not having submitted the address to his troops to General Grant. In this same letter he said: "If it be inquired, what then was the motive for so extraordinary an act, I answer, personal hostility—hostility originating in the fact that you in the first instance assigned me to the command of the Mississippi River Expedition—hostility influenced by the contrast made by my subsequent success and his previous failures and disasters and in West Point prejudices."

Answering McClernand's request for a court of inquiry concerning his record and that of Grant from the time of Belmont to that of Vicksburg, Stanton replied that Lincoln, for the present, would not order such a court because

it would withdraw too many needed officers from their command. When he received this message, McClelland wrote Lincoln a letter, and enclosed therewith a long report to General Halleck in which he defended all his actions and assailed Grant's report of the Vicksburg operations on the ground that it appeared to have two objects, "One, to give an account of the operation to his army. The other, to disparage me." In this report McClelland paid his respects to Grant in the following language: "How far General Grant is indebted to the forbearance of officers under his command for his retention in the public service so long, I will not undertake to state unless he should challenge it. None knows better than himself how much he is indebted to that forbearance." Here McClelland implies that Grant's conduct was such as to justify his summary discharge. "Neither will I undertake to show," McClelland went on to say, "that he is indebted to the good conduct of officers and men of his command at different times for the series of successes that have gained him applause, rather than to his own merit as a commander, unless he should challenge it, too."

In answer to McClelland's appeals and protests and those of such friends as Governor Yates, Lincoln wrote him one of the most famous of his fatherly letters. He informed McClelland that his present position was no less painful to him than it was to McClelland himself, that he was grateful for the patriotic stand which McClelland had taken "in this life and death struggle of the nation," and that he had done his utmost to advance him. Lincoln added, however, that to force McClelland back upon General Grant would be to force Grant's resignation, and that he could not offer McClelland a new command because forces were not available:

"I am constantly pressed by those who scold before they think, or without thinking at all, to give commands respectively to Frémont, McClellan, Butler, Sigel, Curtis, Hunter, Hooker, and perhaps others, when, all else out of the way, I have no commands to give them. This is

now your case, which as I have said, pains me not less than it does you. My belief is that the permanent estimate of what a general does in the field is fixed by the 'cloud of witnesses' who have been with him in the field, and that relying on these, he who has the right needs not to fear."

In February of 1863, McClelland was restored to the command of his Thirteenth Corps, from which Grant had dismissed him just before the fall of Vicksburg. The troops of this corps were scattered through the Southwest; before McClelland could participate in the Red River Expedition under Banks, he was stricken with illness, returned to Illinois, and resigned his commission. After the war, he played a prominent part in Democratic politics, and in 1876 was the chairman of the national Democratic convention which nominated Samuel Tilden. Thirty-seven years after his dismissal, McClelland died at Springfield.

All great men leave some casualties behind them on their upward way; McClelland was one of the chief tragedies on Grant's path to fame and immortality.

*See McClelland's Threatening Letter  
OR, 12th 4412, pt. 1 189-186*

# 12

## Grant and Burnside

**B**urnside was one of those men who never achieved greatness but had it thrust upon them. Three times he was offered the command of the Army of the Potomac; twice he declined this high post. When, after the third offer, he finally accepted it, he said that he did so only because he feared the appointment of someone even less competent than himself.

Burnside's name is associated with two great failures: one, the bloody repulse of the Army of the Potomac on a cold December day in 1862 when it attacked the Confederate army under Lee on the heights of Fredericksburg; the other, the explosion of the mine under the Confederate lines at Petersburg on a hot July morning in 1864. These two failures dimmed the brightness of two notable successes which fell to Burnside: one, in the Spring of 1862, when he commanded the successful expedition against the North Carolina forts; the other, in November of 1863, when he repulsed Longstreet's attack at Knoxville and saved that part of eastern Tennessee for the Union.

In contrast with McClellan and Meade, two other commanders of the Army of the Potomac, both of distinguished lineage and heirs of old Philadelphia culture, Ambrose E. Burnside was a child of the log cabin, born at Liberty, Indiana on May 23rd, 1824. He was appointed to West Point by Caleb Smith, later Lincoln's Secretary of the Interior.

The Mexican War was almost over when he graduated from West Point; after six years in the army he resigned his commission and engaged in the manufacture of firearms in Rhode Island. When this proved a failure, the unemployed Burnside wrote to McClellan, then vice-president of the Illinois Central Railroad: "I am now thrown upon the world with absolutely nothing." McClellan obtained for him a post as cashier of the Illinois Central Land Office; in 1860 he was made treasurer of the Illinois Central Railroad. McClellan, not yet married to the lovely Nellie Marcy, established the Burnsides in his Chicago home, where Mrs. Burnside dispensed hospitality to army officers and Chicago friends. It was during this period that the two future commanders of the Army of the Potomac became intimates.

At the outbreak of the war Burnside was made a brigadier-general and commanded a Rhode Island brigade in the battle of Bull Run. Early in 1862 he led the very successful expedition against Roanoke Island, the cradle of American history off the coast of North Carolina, and took twenty-six hundred prisoners. This was the most notable victory of the war up to that time; it was not until a few days later that the capture of Fort Donelson in Tennessee sent Grant's name resounding throughout the nation. Burnside's success on the Carolina coast made him a major-general and his name became one of the best-known among the Union leaders.

After McClellan's retreat down the Peninsula in June of 1862, Lincoln began to seek a new commander for the Army of the Potomac and hit upon Burnside as the man best fitted for that post. Burnside peremptorily declined the proffered position. After Second Bull Run, Lincoln again asked Burnside to take command of the army; once more he declined that high honor. In the Antietam campaign Burnside commanded his Ninth Corps and the left wing of the Union army. On the 17th of September, 1862, the bloodiest day of the Civil War, he greatly displeased McClellan by his long delay in taking Burnside Bridge, which spanned Antietam Creek, and capturing the Confederate position



on the hills beyond. Although ordered to take the bridge at eight in the morning, it was not until one in the afternoon that the 100th Pennsylvania Volunteers, the famous "Roundheads," made up of psalm-singing Presbyterians from western Pennsylvania, carried the bridge.

Dissatisfied with McClellan's long delay in attacking Lee's army after the Antietam campaign, and prodded and goaded by the Radical Republicans, Lincoln replaced McClellan as commander of the Army of the Potomac with Burnside. On a snowy November night McClellan sat in his headquarters near Rectortown, Virginia, writing to his wife and describing the movements of his army. At 11:30 o'clock General C. P. Buckingham, a special messenger from the War Department, accompanied by General Burnside, entered McClellan's tent. After a few moments of general conversation Buckingham said to Burnside, "Well, General, I think we had better tell General McClellan the object of our visit." He then handed McClellan two orders; the first was signed by General Halleck, commander of the Union armies; the second bore the endorsement of General Townsend, the assistant Adjutant-General who was acting for Stanton, the Secretary of War. These two orders directed McClellan to turn his command over to Burnside and proceed to Trenton, New Jersey, there to await further assignment. After he had read the orders, McClellan turned to his old friend Burnside and said, with his always winsome smile, "Well, Burnside, I turn the command over to you." When his visitors had retired, McClellan took up his pen and wrote these words: "They have made a great mistake. Alas for my poor country!" Buckingham had been instructed to see Burnside before visiting McClellan to overcome Burnside's well-known objections to taking the post. This he did by stating that his refusal to take the command would result in Hooker's appointment.

Burnside justified McClellan's use of the word "mistake" when, on the following 13th of December, his army suffered a bloody repulse as it crossed the Rappahannock River and attacked Lee's army on the hills back of Fredericksburg. In

his frank and manly way Burnside assumed the responsibility for the disaster. In his report to General Halleck, he wrote: "To the brave officers and men who accomplished the feat of this crossing in the face of the enemy, I owe everything. For the failure in the attack I am responsible, as the extreme gallantry, courage and endurance shown by them was never excelled, and would have carried the points had it been possible." Lincoln sent him a kind message of comfort and thanked the army for its gallantry and sacrifices.

When he was contemplating another movement against Lee's army in January of 1863, Burnside wrote a letter to Lincoln to state his belief that Stanton and Halleck did not have the confidence of the army and should be removed from their posts. He added that, in view of the fact that a number of his division commanders lacked confidence in his leadership, the army should be commanded by another general. This he followed on the 5th of January with a formal resignation which Lincoln refused to accept. At a midnight interview on the 23rd of January, Burnside submitted to Lincoln his General Order No. 8 in which he dismissed Hooker from the army "as a man unfit to hold an important commission," and asked that other high officers be dismissed or relieved from duty with the Army of the Potomac, among them Generals Franklin and W. F. Smith, two of its ablest officers. Instead of approving these orders, Lincoln relieved Burnside of the command and gave it to "Fighting Joe" Hooker.

In March of 1863, Burnside succeeded to the command of the Department of the Ohio with headquarters at Cincinnati. His loyal soul was sorely tried by the feeling of hostility to the government which prevailed in that part of Ohio and across the river in Kentucky. This led him to issue his celebrated Order No. 38, in which he said that all persons within the Union lines who committed acts for the benefit of the Confederacy would be tried as spies or traitors and, if convicted, be put to death. The order concluded with this statement: "It must be distinctly understood that treason, expressed or implied, will not be tolerated in this depart-

ment." At a mass meeting of protest at Mount Vernon, Ohio, the eloquent and bitter-tongued Copperhead, Clement L. Vallandigham, denounced the government, called Lincoln a tyrant, and said that he despised, spat upon, and trampled under his feet Burnside's Order No. 38. Burnside promptly arrested him. He was tried by a military commission; found guilty of violating the order, he was sentenced to confinement in the military fortress at Fort Warren, Boston.

Lincoln was considerably disturbed by the arrest of Vallandigham, but relieved the tension somewhat by commuting his sentence to expulsion from the Union lines. He was unceremoniously dumped between the lines of the armies of Rosecrans and Bragg in Tennessee; after a brief stay in the South he ran the blockade and went to Bermuda, and thence to Canada, where he issued an address to the people of Ohio, the Democratic party of which had nominated him for governor. At a public meeting of protest against Vallandigham's arrest, held at Albany, New York, resolutions were adopted demanding that the action of Burnside's military commission be reversed and that Vallandigham be set free. Lincoln answered these resolutions in one of his longest, most carefully considered and most notable papers, in which he defended the action of the government. It was in this paper that he wrote:

"Long experience has shown that armies cannot be maintained unless desertion shall be punished by the severe penalty of death. The case requires, and the law and the Constitution sanction, this punishment. Must I shoot a simple-minded soldier boy who deserts, while I must not touch a hair of the wily agitator who induces him to desert? I think that in such a case, to silence the agitator and save the boy is not only constitutional, but, withal, a great mercy."

This was Lincoln at his best.

Although eastern Tennessee was overrun by the Confederate armies, the great majority of its mountain people remained loyal to the Union; this was a section of the country ever dear to the heart of Lincoln. General Rosecrans ad-

vanced across Tennessee towards Chattanooga, driving Bragg's Confederate army before him; at the head of the Army of the Ohio, in which were two divisions of his old Ninth Corps, Burnside was ordered to undertake a movement supporting Rosecrans in the country around Knoxville. The disaster which befell Rosecrans's army in the battle of Chickamauga on September 19th and 20th, 1863 not only threatened the destruction of Rosecrans's army, but also put Burnside and his Army of the Ohio in great jeopardy. Grant fought the battle of Chattanooga in November with the chief purpose of delivering Burnside from his great peril. Toward the end of October Burnside had written to his warm friend, Lincoln, that he was in poor health because of chronic diarrhea, contracted during the Mexican War, that he desired to be relieved of his post, but that he would not ask to be replaced "during the present emergency."

Burnside was first warned of his danger by a telegram from Grant on October 31st: "It is reported on reliable authority large force of Bragg's army is moving towards you. Do you hear anything of such a move?" On November 6th definite information reached Grant through a deserter, a northern man who had lived in Georgia before the war and had been forced into the Confederate service; he reported that part of Bragg's army had withdrawn from Lookout Mountain and started for Knoxville to drive Burnside out of Tennessee. This force, it soon developed, was the contingent commanded by General James Longstreet, one of Lee's ablest corps commanders. Longstreet had been detached from Lee's army in September and had joined Bragg's army at Chickamauga, where it played a decisive part in that Confederate victory. According to Grant, President Jefferson Davis had visited Bragg's army on Missionary Ridge; unable to compose the differences which had arisen between Bragg and Longstreet, he decided to solve the problem by sending Longstreet against Knoxville.

There was intense anxiety for Burnside's army, both at Grant's headquarters and at Washington. Grant's first move to meet this critical situation was to direct Sherman, whose

army had been repairing the railroad from Memphis, to march with all possible speed to Chattanooga. He also ordered Thomas to make an attack on the right of Bragg's army, so as to force the return of Longstreet's corps which had started for Knoxville. Thomas insisted that he could not, because of the state of his artillery, comply with this order. Grant could do nothing further except send dispatches to Burnside, exhorting him to hold on, and wait for Sherman to appear with his army at Chattanooga. In order to encourage Burnside and learn his true state, Grant sent General James H. Wilson and Charles A. Dana to confer with him at Knoxville. They reached Knoxville, three hundred miles from Chattanooga, on November 13th. This was Dana's first meeting with Burnside, and he gives us this impression of him:

"He was rather a large man physically, about six feet tall, with a large face and a small head and heavy side-whiskers. He was an energetic, decided man, frank, manly and well educated. He was a very showy officer—Not that he *made* any show; he was naturally that. When he first talked with you, you would think he had a great deal more intelligence than he really possessed. You had to know him some time before you really took his measure."

Burnside was at first disposed to retreat before the approach of Longstreet's army. General Parke, one of his division commanders, argued in vain against this proposed movement; but finally Colonel Wilson overcame this intention with the ironical statement that "Grant did not wish him to include the capture of his entire army among the elements of his plan of operations." Meanwhile, Halleck, the general-in-chief, had been urging Grant to undertake a diversionary movement behind Longstreet's army and force him to fall back: "I fear further delay may result in Burnside's abandonment of East Tennessee. This would be a terrible misfortune, and must be averted if possible." At about the same time Halleck telegraphed to Burnside: "It is of vital importance that you hold your position for a few

days till he [Grant] can send you assistance. If you retreat now, it will be disastrous to the campaign." On the same day Halleck telegraphed again to Grant, saying that unless he sent Burnside immediate assistance, he feared he would surrender his position to the enemy. "Immediate aid from you is now of vital importance." Grant's reply stated that he was "pushing everything to give General Burnside early aid." The next day Grant wired Burnside, expressing satisfaction with the plans he was following, and said: "I want the enemy's progress retarded at every foot all it can be, only giving up each place when it becomes evident that it cannot be longer held without endangering your force to capture." On the 18th Burnside telegraphed both Grant and Lincoln that fighting had commenced that morning at 10 o'clock, that he had lost about a quarter of a mile of ground, but that he had every hope of repelling an assault on his lines about Knoxville.

When Grant, at Chattanooga, and Lincoln learned that the battle had commenced at Knoxville, there was intense anxiety on all sides. "The President, the Secretary of War and General Halleck," Grant wrote, "were in an agony of suspense. My suspense was also great, but more endurable, because I was where I could soon do something to relieve the situation." Burnside had now been cut off from telegraphic communications with Grant, but on November 22nd Grant got a message through to General Wilcox, one of Burnside's division commanders who was some distance from Knoxville and still in communication with the North, saying: "If you can communicate with General Burnside, say to him that our attack on Bragg will commence in the morning. If successful, such a move will be made as I think will relieve East Tennessee, if he can hold out." The next morning, November 23rd, the battle at Chattanooga commenced with every promise of success. When Grant telegraphed this news to Washington, Lincoln replied: "Your dispatches as to fighting on Monday and Tuesday are here. Well done. Many thanks to all. Remember Burnside."

As soon as the battle of Chattanooga ended in the great

victory of November 25th, Grant started Sherman with a large force to relieve Knoxville. On November 29th he telegraphed Burnside: "I congratulate you on the tenacity with which you have thus far held out against vastly superior forces. Do not be forced into a surrender by short rations. Within a few days you will be relieved. There are now three columns in motion for your relief. These three columns will be able to crush Longstreet's forces or drive them from the valley."

Early in the morning of that same day Longstreet hurled his army against Burnside's lines at Knoxville and met with a decisive and bloody repulse. Warned by the approach of Sherman's army, he gave up the siege and started his retreat into Virginia. Thus was that part of east Tennessee saved for the Union. A joint resolution by the Senate and House of Representatives declared: "That the thanks of the Congress be, and they hereby are, presented to Major-General Ambrose E. Burnside, and through him to the officers and men who have fought under his command, for their gallantry, good conduct and soldier-like endurance."

On one of those days of his intense anxiety concerning Burnside and his army at Knoxville, Lincoln relieved his tension with a characteristic anecdote. He had received a message from General Foster, who was at Cumberland Gap on his way to relieve Burnside, that he could get no news, but that his scouts reported heavy firing coming from Burnside's direction. When he read this telegram, Lincoln said to those around him: "A neighbor of mine in Menard County, named Sally Ward, had a large family of children that she took very little care of. Whenever she heard one of them yelling in some out of the way place, she would say, 'Thank the Lord! There's one of my young ones not dead yet!'" Thus, the report of heavy firing at Knoxville let Lincoln know that at least one of his generals was not yet captured.

When Grant began to make his plans as general-in-chief of all the armies, Burnside was appointed to the

command of his old corps, the Ninth, which he recruited to a strength of twenty-five thousand; this was the corps which boasted that it had never lost a gun or a flag. At the start of the campaign, the Ninth Corps was not attached to the Army of the Potomac, no doubt partly because Burnside ranked Meade, but served as an independent auxiliary force. When Grant crossed the Rapidan and commenced the battles of the Wilderness, Burnside was left behind with the Ninth Corps at the fords of the Rappahannock, but with instructions to move promptly as soon as he received word of the successful crossing of the Rapidan. On the evening of May 4th Burnside learned that the Army of the Potomac had crossed the Rapidan; by six o'clock the next morning he led his corps into action at the Wilderness Tavern. During the night his men had marched thirty miles and had crossed both the Rappahannock and Rapidan Rivers. Of this movement Grant said: "Considering that a large proportion, probably two-thirds of his command, was composed of new troops unaccustomed to marches and carrying the accoutrements of a soldier, this was a remarkable march."

The last chapter in the military service of General Burnside was written in the lines about Petersburg, the back door to Richmond, which Grant was then besieging. In one of Burnside's divisions there was a lieutenant-colonel named Henry Pleasants, a mining expert whose regiment was made up of miners from the anthracite coal region of Pennsylvania. Pleasants suggested to Potter, his division commander, that a mine be dug under the Confederate lines in front of the Ninth Corps. Burnside and Potter were both favorable to the plan, but General Meade and Major Duane, chief engineer of the Army of the Potomac, were skeptical, saying that a mine of such length had never been excavated in military operations, and that the whole scheme was "clap-trap and nonsense." Nevertheless, Meade did not forbid Burnside to make the attempt. The work was commenced on June 25th and finished on July 23rd. Dirt was removed by night in cracker boxes bound with hoops of iron from



old beef and pork barrels. The deposits of earth near the mouth of the mine were covered with bushes and branches of trees. When completed, the mine was 510 feet long; it had two galleries, the left lateral gallery thirty-seven feet long, and the right lateral gallery thirty-eight feet long. The passage to the mine was four and one-half feet high and equally wide. Eight thousand pounds of powder were placed within it.

Soon after the mine was commenced, unfortunate difficulties arose between General Meade, the commander of the Army of the Potomac, and General Burnside, whose Ninth Corps had, after the battle of the Wilderness, been incorporated with the Army of the Potomac and was now under Meade's command. Burnside ranked Meade, but for the good of the army and the cause had generously waived his rank, as did also one of his division commanders, General Parke. On July 3rd Meade asked Burnside for a report as to the practicability of an assault on his front, provided two other corps co-operated in the attack. Burnside replied that such an attack should be postponed until the mine was finished, and then added: "If the assault be made now, I think we have a fair chance of success, provided my corps can make the attack and it is left to me to say when and how the other two corps shall come in to my support." The testy Meade interpreted this language as a reflection upon his ability to command the movements of his army and an invasion of his prerogative as commander of the Army of the Potomac. In his reply he said to Burnside: "Should it be determined to employ the army under my command in offensive operations on your front, I shall exercise the prerogative of my position to control and direct the same, receiving gladly at all times such suggestions as you may think proper to make." He added that to accede in advance to Burnside's conditions would be inconsistent with his position as commanding general of the army.

Burnside expressed surprise that Meade had so misconstrued his language and replied: "I assure you in all candor that I never dreamed of implying any lack of confidence in

your ability to do all that is necessary in any grand movement which may be undertaken by your army. . . It is hardly necessary for me to say that I have the utmost faith in your ability to handle troops, and certainly accord to you a much higher position in the art of war than I possess."

After this humble disclaimer by Burnside, Meade wrote him a friendly note, telling him that their correspondence would not be shown to Grant. Nevertheless, this unpleasant interchange did not augur well for the success of the great enterprise they were undertaking.

Burnside planned to make the assault after the mine was exploded by Ferreo's division of colored troops. He argued that, although few of the colored troops had seen action, that very fact fitted them to make the assault because they were not familiar with the risks and dangers of such an attack, whereas the veteran white troops of his other divisions, having been accustomed to fight under cover for more than a month, would seek the first shelter they could find after the first rush. This, as we shall see, was the very thing they did. Meade refused to allow the colored division to make the assault; however, he told Burnside he would submit the matter for final decision to Grant. In his interview with Grant, Meade stated his belief that if the colored troops were put in the lead and the attack should prove a failure, it would then be said, and very properly, "that we were shoving those people ahead to get killed because we did not care anything about them."

Grant concurred in Meade's opinion and Burnside was therefore ordered to have the assault made by one of his white divisions. This order hampered Burnside at the very outset by forcing him to change his plans on June 29th, just one day before the time set for the explosion of the mine. The colored troops had been carefully trained for the assault; now, the imminence of the attack denied him the opportunity to train a white division. As the time for exploding the mine approached, Grant ordered Sheridan's cavalry and Hancock's infantry to create a diversion north

of the James River in order to draw off some of Lee's troops at Petersburg. When he was satisfied that this strategy had enticed some of Lee's forces from the area, he approved the time set for the explosion of the mine at 3:30 on the morning of July 30th.

Although forbidden to employ a colored division, Burnside retained the privilege of choosing a leader for the attack from among Potter, Wilcox, and Ledlie, the commanders of his three white divisions. Either having no preference or being unwilling to express one, Burnside called a conference at which his subordinates were asked to draw lots to determine who should lead the assault. The choice, which events soon proved to be a most unfortunate one, fell upon General Ledlie and his men.

On the afternoon of July 29th, Grant came up from his headquarters at City Point and bivouacked near Burnside's headquarters at the center of the line. Here he was joined by Meade; Burnside occupied a more advanced position near a fourteen-gun battery from which he could observe the operation. At 3:30 in the morning Grant, Meade, and their staffs assembled to await the explosion. Minute after minute passed noiselessly. At the end of an hour, Lieutenant Jacob Doughty and Sergeant Henry Reese, attached to the Forty-Eighth Pennsylvania Regiment which had dug the mine, volunteered to enter the tunnel to ascertain the cause of the delay. They found that the fuse had burned out at one of the splices and relighted it.

At 4:46 the mine exploded. General Horace Porter, Grant's aide, who was standing by his side at the time, gives this account of what happened:

"It was now twenty minutes to five, over an hour past the appointed time. The general had been looking at his watch and had just returned it to his pocket, when suddenly there was a shock like that of an earthquake, accompanied by a dull, muffled roar. Then there rose two hundred feet in the air great volumes of earth in the shape of a mighty inverted cone, with forked tongues of flame darting through it like lightning playing through

the clouds. The mass seemed to be suspended for an instant in the heavens; then there descended great blocks of clay, rock, sand, timber, guns, carriages, and men whose bodies exhibited every form of mutilation. It appeared as if part of the debris was going to fall upon the front line of our troops, and this created some confusion and a delay of ten minutes in forming them for the charge."

The explosion itself was a great success; the crater formed by the mighty blast was two hundred feet long, fifty feet wide, and twenty-five feet deep. The Confederates occupying the forts to the right and left of the explosion deserted their works, and for half an hour neglected completely to use either their muskets or their artillery. From the very first, however, things went wrong with the assault. Ledlie's troops were slow in removing the abatis and parapets which protected them, but finally filed out of their trenches. The colored troops had been trained to go to the left and right of the crater, but Ledlie's division acted as Burnside predicted they would in seeking cover under the wall of the crater. There a strange and terrible sight met them. The great chasm was strewn with chunks of clay and fragments of gun carriages and timbers; heads, feet, and arms protruded here and there from the earth. Confronted with this horror, the men in the front rank seemed to forget that they had come to fight; pausing on the brink of the crater, they were pushed over its edge by the rush of men behind them. All order and discipline vanished; in the crowded pit the men could maintain their footing only by facing into the depression and clinging to its banks with their hands. Constantly more men came sliding and tumbling into the fatal hole, creating a veritable hell of stench, terror, and confusion.

Presently the startled Confederates recovered from their surprise sufficiently to train their guns on the writhing mass of soldiers which now included the men of General Potter's Second Division who had followed the First Division into the carnage and confusion of the crater. At 8 o'clock Meade issued peremptory orders to employ all troops, and General

Ferreo's colored division, which had been specially trained for the attack, was sent in. This division moved to the right of the crater; striking the enemy's lines, they captured several hundred Confederates, the only prisoners taken by the Union army that day. But when they attacked the crest in the rear of the hollow, which was the key to the battlefield, they were met with a countercharge and driven back into the crater.

This pit was now a scene of terrible confusion. As General Ord described it in his testimony before the Court of Inquiry, the soldiers piled on top of one another were as much use "as so many men on the bottom of a well." The vast depression was filled with a struggling mass of white and colored troops who cowered against the steep yellow sides, vainly seeking shelter from the Confederate artillery which played upon them pitilessly. The blood of the wounded near the top flowed in streams down the sides of the excavation and gathered in crimson pools at the bottom. The sun was now high and the day was one of fearful heat. The men suffered terribly from thirst; soon a wave of moisture created by exhalations of the bloody, seething, struggling, and perspiring mass rose like a cloud over this tragic scene.

When it became evident that things were going badly, Grant mounted his horse; accompanied only by Porter, his aide, and a single orderly, he started for the front. Near a fieldwork about three hundred yards distant to the left, he could see a number of officers standing together and supposed that Burnside was one of them. Instead of taking the long obstacle-strewn passage inside the Union lines, Grant climbed nimbly over the parapet and down in front of the earthworks where the shots were flying thick and fast. Porter held his breath in fear for his commander's safety as the cannon balls shrieked through the air and ploughed the ground around them. When Grant joined Burnside, he spoke with great rapidity: "The entire opportunity has been lost. There is now no chance for success. These troops

must be immediately withdrawn. It is slaughter to leave them here."

At 6 o'clock in the morning General Meade sent an order to Burnside to "push his men forward at all hazards, white and black"; he was not to lose time in making formations, but rush for the crest. Unlike Grant, Meade had not gone to the front; he was a mile in the rear at his own headquarters, fighting the battle by telegraph and, to use his own words, "groping in the dark from the commencement of the attack." Burnside replied to this order: "I am doing all in my power to push the troops forward, and if possible we will carry the crest. It is hard work, but we hope to accomplish it. I am fully alive to the importance of it."

At 7:30 Meade replied with this telegram: "What do you mean by hard work to take the crest? I understand not a man has advanced beyond the enemy's lines which you occupied immediately after exploding the mine. Do you mean to say that your officers and men will not obey your orders to advance? If not, what is the obstacle? I wish to know the truth, and desire an immediate answer."

This ill-worded message stung and angered the generally amiable Burnside. In his reply he said: "Your dispatch by Captain Jay received. I do not mean to say that my officers and men will not obey my orders to advance. I mean to say that it is very hard to advance to the crest. I have never in any report said anything different from what I conceived to be the truth. Were it not insubordinate, I would say that the latter remark of your note was unofficer-like and ungentlemanly."

At 9:45 General Meade ordered Burnside to withdraw the troops from the crater to the shelter of the Union lines. Burnside was reluctant to give up the attempt; mounting his horse, he rode over to General Meade's headquarters, which were then at his own. Entering the headquarters tent with General Ord, Burnside found Grant and Meade together. He expressed the opinion that the struggle should continue and that the crest beyond the crater could still be carried by a decided effort. Meade replied that the order

to withdraw was final. Porter said of this interview: "Both of these officers lost their tempers that morning, although Burnside was usually the personification of amiability, and the scene between them was decidedly peppery and went far toward confirming one's belief in the wealth and flexibility of the English language as a medium of personal dispute."

After Meade had given this final order for withdrawal, he returned to the headquarters of the Army of the Potomac; Grant, downcast and disappointed, proceeded to City Point, leaving Burnside to extricate his men as best he could. Burnside had commenced to dig a covered way by which the troops might be withdrawn; at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, however, a Confederate charge drove the men out of the crater and back to the Union lines. The explosion cost the Army of the Potomac four thousand men in killed, wounded, and captured and was, as Grant termed it, "a stupendous failure."

At his remote headquarters, far from the scene of action, Meade did not learn of his troops' forced withdrawal until late in the evening. At 7:40 that night Burnside received a dispatch from Meade, the first of a series, asking if the men were still in the hollow. Burnside angrily threw the note on the ground, observing to an aide that General Meade had ordered the cessation of supporting operations before the crater was evacuated; that he had taken so little interest in the matter as not to know late in the evening that the troops had been driven from the pit before 2 o'clock; and that under these circumstances he was not entitled to a confirmation of information which he should have acquired sooner. Burnside later confessed before the Committee on the Conduct of the War that his treatment of this and subsequent dispatches was "very improper."

The failure of the attack disappointed and angered Grant, Meade, Burnside, and the division commanders. Two days after the fiasco Grant inquired of Meade: "Have you any estimate of our losses in the miserable failure of Saturday? I think there will have to be an investigation of the matter. So fair an opportunity will probably never again

occur for carrying fortifications; preparations were good; orders ample." Grant wrote to General Halleck concerning the mine disaster: "It was the saddest affair I have witnessed in the war."

Angered by Burnside's cavalier treatment of his messages, Meade not only asked Grant to relieve Burnside from further duty with the Army of the Potomac, but preferred charges as the first step to a court-martial. In the charges which he forwarded to Grant's chief of staff, General John A. Rawlins, Meade said:

"Although professing the utmost willingness to serve under my command, General Burnside has, nevertheless, repeatedly, in various ways, performed acts and exercised powers inconsistent with his position as a subordinate . . . The whole course of that officer on the 30th ultimo, and subsequently, has been of such a character that it is impossible that I can properly command this army if he continues in command. . . I have no personal feeling in this matter and fully appreciate the many good qualities of General Burnside. But it is out of the question, after what has passed, that there can be that harmony and co-operation between us which ought to exist, and I am compelled to ask his relief."

Grant ignored Meade's request; he probably smiled when he read Meade's further statement about Burnside's "unguarded ebullitions of temper," for he was well aware that Meade was so notoriously ill-tempered that even the members of his own staff feared to address him in the midst of battle.

Although his request that Burnside be relieved from duty with the Army of the Potomac was not granted, Meade was determined not to let the matter rest there. With the subsequent sanction of the President, he appointed a court of inquiry. Burnside made a formal protest to the Secretary of War against the constitution of the court on the ground that the officers composing it were officers of the supporting columns which were not brought into action and that the judge advocate was a member of Meade's staff. He said he



did not shrink from an investigation, but felt it could not be impartial if he were to be judged by officers of the Army of the Potomac. Stanton replied that Lincoln was disinclined to make any change in the court once it had been appointed; that its only purpose was to obtain information; and that no individual harm would result.

The president of the court was General Hancock, commander of the Second Corps. After hearing the testimony of Grant, Meade, Burnside, and other officers, the court censured Burnside for failing to obey the orders of General Meade; for deploying his troops incorrectly; for not preparing his parapets and abatis for the passage of the assaulting column; and for failing to execute Meade's orders to have the advance column move from the crater to the crest. The court also censured General J. H. Ledlie, commander of the division which made the first attack, for failing to advance his troops, thus blocking the avenue designed for the passage of the regiments which were to follow, and for not reporting to Burnside that the men could not be brought forward. Worst of all, it condemned Ledlie for not exposing himself during the action: "Instead of being with his division during the difficulty in the crater, and by his personal efforts endeavoring to lead his troops forward, he was most of his time in a bomb proof, ten rods in rear of the main line of the Ninth Corps, where it was impossible for him to see anything of the movements of the troops that were going on."

While the verdict of the court of inquiry was adverse to Burnside, that of the Committee on the Conduct of the War was altogether favorable. This powerful committee was appointed soon after the disaster which befell a part of McClellan's army at Ball's Bluff in October of 1861. It was composed of three members of the Senate and four from the House of Representatives and was dominated by the Radical Republicans. The fiery Benjamin F. Wade of Ohio was chairman of the committee which heard the principal actors in the tragedy of the crater. In his testimony, Grant expressed the opinion that if the colored division had

made the attack, as originally planned by Burnside, it probably would have succeeded. However, he defended upholding Meade's objection to Burnside's plan on the ground that only success would have justified the use of the colored troops. In relating his experience when he went to the front soon after the explosion, Grant said:

"I found there that we had lost the opportunity which had been given us. I am satisfied that if the troops had been properly commanded and been led in accordance with General Meade's orders, we would have captured Petersburg without the loss of five hundred men. . . . That opportunity was lost in consequence of the division commanders not going with their men. . . . I blame myself a little for one thing. I was informed of the fact that General Burnside trusted to the pulling of straws which division should lead. It happened to fall on what I thought was the worst commander in his corps. I knew that fact before the mine was exploded, but did nothing in regard to it. . . . I think if I had been down there, I would have seen that it was done right; or if I had been the commander of the division that had to take the lead, I think I would have gone in with my division."

Asked further as to the cause of the disaster, Grant said; "I think the cause of the disaster was simply the leaving the passage of orders from one to another down to an inefficient man [Ledlie]. I blame his superiors also [Burnside and Meade] for not seeing that he did his duty, all the way up to myself."

The verdict of the committee was to the effect that the primary cause of the disaster was Meade's last-day change of Burnside's plan to have the colored division lead in the attack, and that the conduct of the white division in seeking shelter confirmed Burnside's judgment. The committee criticized Burnside only for selecting the commander and division to lead the assault by drawing lots. In conclusion, the committee expressed its regret and surprise that Burnside's carefully laid plan for the assault "should have been so entirely disregarded by a general [Meade] who had

evinced no faith in the successful prosecution of that work, had aided it by no countenance or open approval, and had assumed the entire direction and control only when it was completed and the time had come for reaping any advantage that might be derived from it."

Burnside realized that it would be impossible for him to serve any longer under Meade, and asked for leave of absence. This was granted and he never again returned to active service. He later asked permission to see Grant at his headquarters at City Point. Burnside was refused this interview; instead, he received a letter from Parker, Grant's military secretary, stating that Grant had unsuccessfully requested Stanton to place him in temporary command of the Middle Department during the absence of General Lew Wallace and that he "has at present no command which he can assign you without making changes it is not desirable should be made."

One of Burnside's last communications to the War Department was a telegram dispatched to Stanton on March 23rd, 1865 and reading: "If I can be of any service to General Grant or General Sherman as a subordinate commander, or aide-de-camp, or as a bearer of dispatches from you to either of them, I am quite ready." This final message from Burnside to his government contrasts strangely with the proud, contentious, and self-seeking spirit of many of the high commanders of the Union armies. Here is a man who had served as commander of the Army of the Potomac and taken part in more engagements, from Bull Run to Petersburg, than almost any other officer, who at the end of his career offers his services in any subordinate capacity. Burnside was great in his humility; like Grant, he was one of the few humble men who have been great military leaders.

Burnside was one of the noblest characters among the generals in the Union Army. After the Fredericksburg disaster he wrote to a friend these words: "Time and history will vindicate me; and if they fail to do so, it is better that I should remain under a cloud than that a word should be added to the dissensions already too prevalent in the army."

Had Burnside's military ability equalled his nobility of character, he would have been the greatest general in the Union Army.

Grant's final estimate of Burnside, written twenty years after the war, is interesting: "General Burnside was an officer who was generally liked and respected. He was not, however, fitted to command an army. No one knew this better than himself. He always admitted his blunders and extenuated those of his officers under him beyond what they were entitled to. It was hardly his fault that he was ever assigned to a separate command."

# 13

## Grant and Sherman

Sherman's career before the Civil War did not equal Grant's complete and dismal failure; it was, however, anything but successful. After graduating from West Point in sixth place in the class of 1840, he served at army posts in Florida, South Carolina, and Georgia. Unlike Grant and most of the generals who rose to distinction in the Civil War in both the Union and Confederate armies, Sherman saw no active service in the Mexican War. During that period he was sent to California, where he served as an aide to General Stephen W. Kearny and as adjutant-general to General Persifor F. Smith.

In 1850 he married Ellen Ewing, the daughter of his guardian, Thomas Ewing, member of Congress from Ohio and a man of great influence. In 1853 Sherman left the army, one year before Grant resigned under a cloud, to represent a St. Louis bank, first in San Francisco and then in New York, until it failed in the panic of 1857. He next tried his hand at the law; without examination, he was admitted to the bar at Leavenworth, Kansas, where he became a partner of Thomas Ewing's sons, Hugh and Thomas, and of Daniel McCook, who afterwards served under Sherman in the Civil War and was killed at Kenesaw Mountain in 1864.

His efforts to return to the army were unsuccessful; haunted constantly by his father-in-law's offer to make him

overseer of his Ohio salt mines, in 1859 Sherman took the post of superintendent of a military college at Alexandria, Louisiana, where he served until January 18th, 1861. When Louisiana seceded from the Union, Sherman, disgusted with the attitude of Lincoln and others in authority at Washington, accepted the presidency of a horsecar railway in St. Louis. At the same time Grant was piling up hides in his brothers' leather store at Galena, Illinois.

On May 9th, 1861, Grant and Sherman, who were later to be closely associated in the forefront of the hottest battles, witnessed their first clash of arms in the war. Captain Nathaniel Lyon, in command of the troops of the arsenal at St. Louis, seized Camp Jackson on the outskirts of the city and took the militia, which were prepared to desert to the Confederacy, prisoners of war. On that May morning Sherman took his son Willie, then seven years old, by the hand and started to walk in the direction of Camp Jackson. He soon met the regiment of the patriotic and energetic Francis P. Blair, which had the Camp Jackson prisoners under guard. In the excitement a drunken man fired a pistol at the troops; the soldiers retaliated by firing over the heads of the mob. Sherman was standing in a grove nearby with his boy and his brother-in-law, Ewing. When the firing commenced, he picked up Willie and ran with him into a gully where they lay flat on the ground until the troops moved on. Thus, the "fighting prophet" first appeared under fire in the Civil War lying flat on his stomach in a depression.

On that same day Grant happened to be in St. Louis. As an assistant to the Adjutant General of Illinois, he had come down to Belleville, Illinois, eighteen miles from the city, to muster in a regiment of volunteers. As the regiment had not yet assembled, he decided to travel to St. Louis for a few days. Thus it happened that he was in the city on that eventful 9th of May when Camp Jackson was captured. Learning of the plan in advance, Grant visited the arsenal where the troops were preparing to march. Seeing

Blair on his horse, Grant introduced himself and expressed his earnest approval of the contemplated move.

Later in the day Grant learned that the camp had surrendered, and again repaired to the arsenal to congratulate Blair and Lyon just after seeing a crowd of citizens tear down a Confederate flag flying over the headquarters of southern sympathizers on Pine Street. As he was riding in one of Sherman's horsecars on his way to the arsenal, a young man, evidently excited, boarded the car. Taking a seat near Grant, he said: "Things have come to a pretty pass when free people can't choose their own flag. Where I come from, if a man dares to say a word in favor of the Union, we hang him to a limb of the first tree we come to." To this Grant quietly rejoined with one of his best speeches: "After all, we are not so intolerant in St. Louis as we might be; I have not seen a single rebel hung yet, nor heard of one; there are plenty of them who ought to be, however." It was in this manner that the orbits of Grant and Sherman approached each other for the first time in the Civil War.

In October of 1861, Sherman succeeded General Robert Anderson in command of the Department of the Cumberland; this introduced him to the most unhappy chapter in his military career. Most of the recruits raised by the loyal states were sent either to McClellan's army in the East or to the western army at St. Louis under the command of Frémont. Sherman felt that the government was neglecting his department; at his urgent request, the then Secretary of War, Simon Cameron, who had been investigating Frémont's administration at St. Louis, stopped off to see Sherman at Louisville. He was accompanied by the army's Adjutant General, Lorenzo Thomas. At a conference at the Galt House attended by others than officials, Sherman requested greater privacy; Cameron replied somewhat testily, "They are all friends, all members of my family, and you may speak your mind freely and without restraint." Among those present was a correspondent of *The New York Tribune*, and the substance of what Sherman supposed to be a confidential conversation was soon made public. When

Sherman said that he would need sixty thousand men for defense and two hundred thousand for offense, Cameron, who was unwell and lying on the bed, raised himself and exclaimed, "Great God! Where are they to come from?"

When he reached Washington, Cameron asked Adjutant General Thomas to furnish a memorandum of the events of their visit in the West. In this report Thomas mentioned Sherman's "insane" request for two hundred thousand men. This was repeated in the newspapers, and it was soon rumored that Sherman was demented. Not long after this he was relieved of his command and General Buell was appointed to succeed him. This action was taken in accordance with Sherman's understanding with Lincoln that he did not wish to be left in an independent command, but to the public at large it seemed to confirm the rumors of his mental instability. There can be no doubt that Sherman was greatly overwrought at that time and unfit to hold an independent command. In his report of November 6th to McClellan, the general-in-chief, he said, "The future looks as dark as possible. It would be better if some man of sanguine mind were here." Bombarded with such telegrams, it is not strange that McClellan transferred Sherman to Halleck's department at St. Louis and gave him a furlough. Halleck reported to McClellan: "I am satisfied that General Sherman's physical and mental system is so completely broken by labor and care as to render him for the present unfit for duty. Perhaps a few weeks' rest may restore him."

Sherman was fortunate in having two powerful friends at court, his wife's father, Thomas Ewing, former senator and cabinet member, and his brother John, the senator from Ohio. These men interested themselves in his welfare; Halleck, glad to please men of such high standing, recalled Sherman to active duty in January of 1862, first placing him in charge of a camp of instruction at Benton, and later in command in western Kentucky. Sherman never forgot this kindness, and is one of the few high officers who came in contact with Halleck who did not regard him as the epi-



tome of stupidity. On September 4th, 1864, Sherman wrote Halleck: "I owe you all I now enjoy of fame, for I had allowed myself in 1861 to sink into a perfect slough of despond, and do believe I would have run away and hid from the dangers and complications that surrounded us." Sherman gave Halleck full credit for the successful movement which resulted in the capture of Fort Henry and Fort Donelson, and says that Halleck had mapped out the plan more than a month before General Grant started his operations, a claim which Grant later denied.

During the campaign against Fort Donelson Sherman, who had been placed in command of the troops around Paducah, Kentucky, was instructed to forward all available men and supplies to reinforce Grant in his attack on the Confederate fortress. Although Sherman at that time ranked Grant, he complied with the request with the greatest energy and dispatch. Grant later recalled this invaluable assistance:

"At the time he was my senior in rank, and there was no authority of law to assign a junior to command a senior of the same grade; but every boat that came up with supplies or reinforcements brought a note of encouragement from Sherman, asking me to call upon him for any assistance he could render, and saying that if he could be of any service at the front I might send for him and he would waive rank."

That was the beginning of a long and unbroken chapter of mutual loyalty and enthusiastic support between these two great soldiers.

After the brilliant victory at Fort Donelson in February, Halleck had relieved Grant of his command and appointed General C. F. Smith, revered by both Grant and Sherman, to command the expedition up the Tennessee River. Smith had been the preceptor of both Grant and Sherman at West Point. In a speech he made at St. Louis in 1865, Sherman said of Smith: "At that time [just before the battle of Shiloh] General C. F. Smith was in command. He was a man indeed. All the old officers remember him

as a gallant and excellent officer, and had he lived, probably some of us younger fellows would not have attained to our present position."

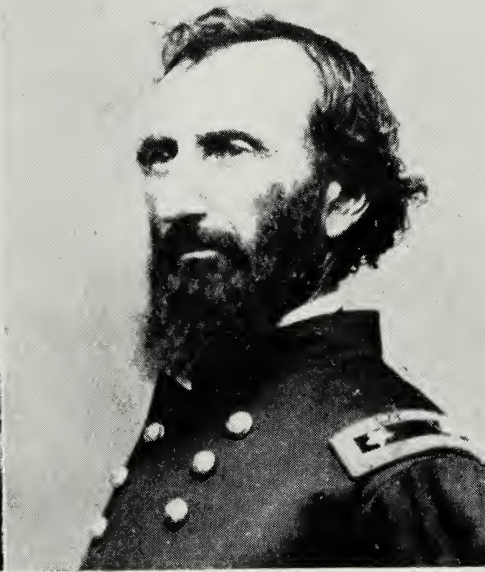
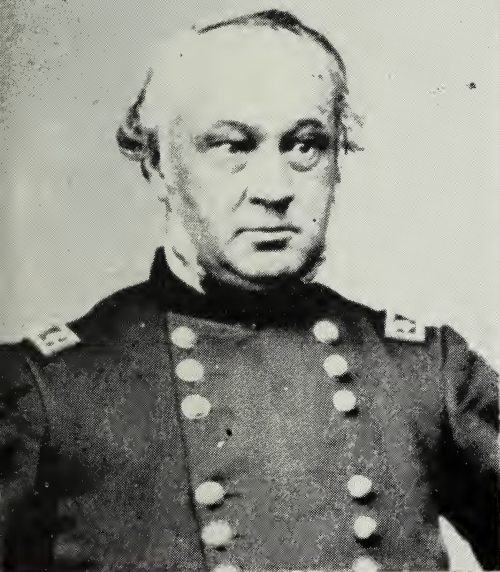
Although Grant has often been criticised for the situation in which his army found itself when it was attacked and almost destroyed by Johnston on the April morning at Shiloh, it was the splendid soldier, C. F. Smith, who had chosen Pittsburg Landing, on the west side of the Tennessee River, for his camps. The position was protected on both flanks by deep flooded ravines; in the event of defeat, however, it would have been almost impossible to withdraw the army, for the river was too high for a pontoon bridge. When General Smith was injured by a fall in a yawl from the effects of which he later died, Halleck restored Grant to the command. Grant chose to leave the army in the position selected by Smith, and made his headquarters at Savannah, nine miles down the river; this was north of Pittsburg Landing, or Shiloh, Tennessee.

Grant maintained his headquarters at Savannah because he was expecting Buell with the Army of the Ohio. In common with many others, he expected that a great battle would finish the war in the West. In a letter to his wife, written on March 29th, not long before the battle at Shiloh, he said: "A big fight may be looked for some place before a great while, which it appears to me will be the last in the West. This is all the time supposing that we will be successful, which I never doubt for a single moment."<sup>1</sup>

On the morning of April 6th, 1862, General Albert Sidney Johnston, commander of the Confederate army confronting Grant near Shiloh, said to the members of his staff as he mounted his horse, "Gentlemen, tonight we will water our horses in the Tennessee." His prediction almost came true; when night put an end to the bloody battle of the first day, the Union lines had been pushed back almost to the river.

---

<sup>1</sup> Grant letters, Chicago Historical Society.

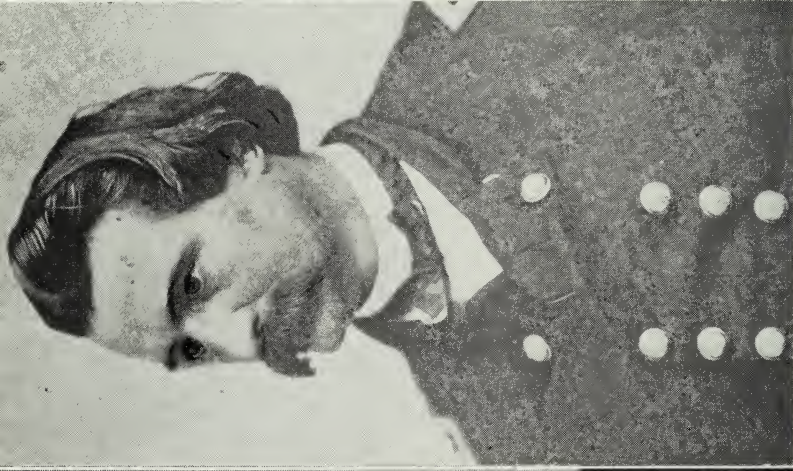


*Upper: Grant with his Staff in 1864*

*Lower left: Henry W. Halleck, originally general-in-chief, later became Grant's chief of staff. Although his soldiers called him "Old Brains", Chase called him "good for nothing"; McClellan said he was "hopelessly stupid."* *Lower right: John A. McClernand - Although Grant called him "entirely unfit for the position of a corps commander", President Lincoln appointed him to an independent command in Grant's department. Dismissed by his chief, he became another tragedy in Grant's upward march to fame.*



James H. Wilson who suggested the plan of campaign which resulted in the capture of Vicksburg. He was considered by Grant to be capable of replacing any of his chief lieutenants.



John A. Logan, the ablest and most inspiring leader among the "civilian" generals. He strove to obtain a third term for Grant in 1880 and served as Blaine's running-mate in 1884.



Benjamin F. Butler the inventor of the flame-thrower and the incendiary bomb, General William F. Smith characterized him as "helpless as a child on the field of battle and as visionary as an opium-eater in council."

Grant was taking an early breakfast at the Cherry House in Savannah when he heard the sound of the cannonading at Shiloh, nine miles distant. Putting down the untasted cup of coffee, he listened for a moment, and then said to his staff, "Gentlemen, the ball is in motion. Let's be off!" In a few minutes the dispatch boat *Tigress* was carrying him up the river toward Pittsburg Landing. At Crump's Landing he ran his boat in close to the shore and instructed Lew Wallace to have his division under arms and ready to march at a moment's notice. Ordered to move, this fine division took the wrong road and had to countermarch; despite the messages sent to Wallace by McPherson and Rawlins of Grant's staff, it did not reach the front until that night, too late to be of any assistance during the hours when Grant's army was being steadily pressed back towards the river.

Sherman's three brigades were posted on the Union right near Shiloh Meeting House; there the full fury of the Confederate onset fell on them and pushed them back on McClernand's division. By the time the day's fighting was finished, Sherman's and McClernand's troops, fighting together, had occupied eight different positions. Grant reached the front about 10 o'clock and for a few minutes talked with Sherman, whom he found full of confidence and defiance.

General Johnston fell mortally wounded in the battle around the Hornet's Nest, where the Confederates were attacking the divisions of W. H. L. Wallace and Prentiss. General Peter T. G. Beauregard, famed for his part in the battle of Bull Run, then succeeded to the command; as night fell, he gave the order to cease from the attack. When he received the order to cease fire, one of his subordinates, Bragg, exclaimed, "My God, my God, it is too late!" One cannot predict what would have happened had Beauregard pressed the attack. The remnants of Grant's army were well posted and full of fight, the Union gunboats on the river were beginning to throw their shells into the Confederate ranks, and Nelson's division of Buell's Army of the Ohio had been ferried over the river and was

ready to take a part in the conflict. Moreover, the veteran division of Lew Wallace, delayed all day through having taken a wrong road to the front, was now present and ready for action. Grant himself said that only night came in time to be of any help to him; yet he must have prayed as earnestly for "night or Buell" as Wellington at Waterloo prayed for "von Blücher or night." "Thus night came," says Grant, "Wallace came, and the advance of Nelson's division came; but none—unless night—in time to be of material service to the gallant men who saved Shiloh on that first day against heavy odds."

At 5 o'clock the next morning the reinforced Union army marched out to the attack and the Confederate army was driven from the field; the first great battle of the war, astounding the nation with its long lists of the slaughtered, ended in victory for the North. President Jefferson Davis, who thought that victory would have rested with the Confederate army had Johnston not fallen at a critical moment and had Beauregard not given the order to cease firing, said of General Johnston, "The fortunes of a country hung by a single thread of the life that was yielded on the field of Shiloh."

General Buell, commanding the Army of the Ohio, had arrived with the advance of his army at Savannah the evening of the 5th of April, but had not yet seen Grant. He was eating breakfast at Nelson's camp when he heard the sound of the firing at Shiloh and hurried to Grant's headquarters at the Cherry House. Finding that Grant had already started up the river, he boarded a steamer and hurried towards the front at Pittsburg Landing. On his way he received an order from Grant addressed to the "Commanding Officer, advanced forces, near Pittsburg," saying that the appearance of fresh troops on the field would inspire the men at the front "and possibly save the day to us."

Buell reached Pittsburg Landing at 1 o'clock to find Grant and the members of his staff on his headquarters boat. When they met, Grant held up his sword, calling attention to a dent made on the scabbard by a bullet when

he was at the front. According to Buell's testimony, Grant showed grave concern over the situation:

"He appeared to realize that he was beset by a pressing danger, and manifested by manner more than in words that he was relieved by my arrival as indicating the near approach of succor; but there was nothing in his deportment that the circumstances would not have justified without disparagement to the character of a courageous soldier. Certainly there was none of that masterly confidence which has since been assumed with reference to the occasion."

After this brief interview Grant and his staff mounted and rode off, and Buell and his staff walked up the hill toward the front. On the shore near the landing he found everything in chaos and confusion. Hundreds of panic-stricken men, mounted and on foot, and wagoners with their teams were crowding down towards the river. Buell met an Ohio officer still possessed of his senses and gave him instructions to get the teams and wagons off the road and down to the bank so that Nelson's troops, when they arrived, would be able to come up from the river and enter the action. Soon after Grant had left Sherman's front, Buell approached to ask Sherman about the progress of the battle and the positions occupied by the army. Sherman thought that Buell distrusted the whole situation and feared that he and his army would not cross over to aid Grant for fear of becoming involved in the general disaster.

Just before dark Grant again rode up to visit Sherman and expressed satisfaction with the way he was holding on the right, but said that things did not look as well over on the left; he left orders to be prepared to attack in the morning, for he was convinced that the battle was over for the day. He said to Sherman that at Fort Donelson both sides at one time seemed to be defeated, but that a vigorous offensive had carried the day there; similarly, he believed that whoever first assumed the offensive now at Shiloh was sure to win. Although early in the battle Grant had urged Buell to hasten to the front and thus possibly "save the day," it

is certain that he never seriously considered the possibility of defeat. "There was in fact no hour during the day," he says, "when I doubted the eventual defeat of the enemy, although I was disappointed that reinforcements so near at hand did not arrive at an earlier hour."

Shiloh brought sorrow, suffering, and death to thousands of men, but it lifted Sherman on high. Before the battle he had been discouraged and downcast by the newspaper reports of his insanity; his part in the bloody struggle on the banks of the Tennessee gave him new life. As he put it in his conversation with Grant, "Now I was in high feather." Nearly everyone was sounding his praise; four days after the battle, General Halleck, always Sherman's firm friend and supporter, recommended him to the Secretary of War for promotion. He said: "It is the unanimous opinion here that Brigadier-General W. T. Sherman saved the fortune of the day on the 6th instant, and contributed largely to the glorious victory on the 7th. He was in the thickest of the fight on both days. . . . I respectfully request that he be made a major-general of volunteers."

In this telegram, which ignored Grant, Halleck employed almost the very words Grant had used about Sherman in his own generous dispatch to the government. In his message Grant had said, "To Sherman, more than to any other, is due the salvation of the army." While praising Sherman, Halleck indirectly struck at Grant. Even General McClelland, who was later to disagree with Sherman, told Grant that it was a great advantage to him to have the support of so able a commander as Sherman. In his recollections of the battle, Grant wrote of Sherman:

"During the whole of Sunday I was continuously engaged in passing from one part of the field to another, giving directions to division commanders. In thus moving along the line, however, I never deemed it important to stay long with Sherman. Although his troops were then under fire for the first time, their commander, by his constant presence with them, inspired a confidence in officers and men that enabled them to render services on that



bloody battlefield worthy of the best veterans. McClelland was next to Sherman, and the hardest fighting was in front of these two divisions. . . A casualty to Sherman that would have taken him from the field that day would have been a sad one for the troops engaged at Shiloh. And how near we came to this! On the 6th Sherman was shot twice, once in the hand, once in the shoulder, the ball cutting his coat and making a slight wound, and a third ball passed through his hat. In addition to this he had several horses shot during the day."

When the storm of criticism broke, charging Grant with intemperance and with gross neglect and carelessness in exposing his army to an attack in such a dangerous position with a river at his back, Sherman came to his defense. Writing his brother John on April 22nd, he said: "I see that we were surprised, that our men were bayoneted in their tents; that officers had not had breakfast, etc. This is all simply false. The attack did not begin until 7:30 A.M.<sup>1</sup> All but the worthless cowards had had breakfast. Not a man was bayoneted in or near his tent. Indeed our brigade surgeon, Hartshorne, had not yet seen a single bayonet wound on a living or dead subject. . . The common soldiers and subordinates ran away and now want to blame the commanders."

On the 11th of April General Halleck joined the army at Shiloh and took charge in person. Although second in command, Grant in reality had no authority. "I was ignored," Grant says, "as much as if I had been at the most distant point of territory within my jurisdiction." Grant properly took offense when Halleck sent reports from the Army of the Ohio to Washington without first submitting them to him. For this reason Grant, although ordered to do so, refused to make an official report on the battle of Shiloh.

Grant's position with the army was so embarrassing to him that he made several applications to be relieved of his

---

<sup>1</sup> According to General Beauregard, the Confederate attack began at 5 A.M.

command. He was about to leave the army and remove to Memphis when Sherman arrived to report at General Halleck's headquarters. Halleck casually remarked that Grant planned to leave the following day. When Sherman inquired the cause, Halleck pleaded ignorance, but added that Grant had applied for and received thirty days' leave.

Well acquainted with the reasons, Sherman rode over to Grant's headquarters, where he found the office and camp chests piled up in front of the tents ready to be moved in the morning. Grant was sitting in his tent on a campstool, sorting letters and tying them up in bundles with red tape. Sherman asked him if it was true that he was going to leave the army; when Grant answered in the affirmative, he asked the reason. Grant replied, "Sherman, you know that I am in the way here. I have stood it as long as I can, and can endure it no longer." When Sherman asked his destination, Grant replied that he was going to St. Louis. Sherman inquired whether he had any business there and Grant rejoined, "Not a bit." Then Sherman earnestly besought him to remain with the army. He recalled his own unhappy experience when he was considered demented by the press of the country, was about to quit the army, and was restored to confidence by a single battle. Sherman reminded Grant that, if he left the army, great events would continue without him, but that if he remained, some happy accident might restore him to favor and fortune. Grant thanked Sherman for his friendly advice and promised that he would not leave without again communicating with him. He seemed so intent on his purpose, however, that Sherman thought his mind was made up and asked that he be escorted by a company from an Illinois regiment. A few days later he received the good news that Grant had reconsidered his intention and would not depart. Sherman immediately wrote him as follows: "I have just received your note and am rejoiced at your conclusion to remain; for you could not be quiet at home for a week when armies were moving, and rest could not relieve your mind of the gnawing sensation that injustice had been done you."

The "happy accident" which Sherman had foretold soon eventuated in the shape of Halleck's appointment on July 11th, 1862 as general-in-chief of all the armies; Grant was thereby left in sole command of his army and his department. Sherman did Grant and the nation a great service when he encouraged him in his hour of adversity and persuaded him not to desert the army and the cause.

In the battle flames of Shiloh the hearts of three men—Grant, Sherman, and McPherson—were welded into an indissoluble amalgam of friendship and mutual support. Thereafter, Sherman and McPherson were Grant's chief friends and supporters. The close union of these three was to last until McPherson, fighting under Sherman, fell in battle before Atlanta in 1864.

About this time Sherman wrote to his wife describing Grant:

"He is as brave as any man should be. He has won several victories, such as Donelson, which ought to entitle him to universal praise, but his rivals have almost succeeded through the instrumentality of the press in pulling him down, and many thousands of families will be taught to look to him as the cause of the death of their fathers, husbands, and brothers. Grant had made up his mind to go home. I tried to dissuade him, but so fixed was he in his purpose that I thought his mind was made up and asked for his escort a company of the Fourth Illinois. But last night I got a note from him saying he would stay. He is not a brilliant man; but he is a good and brave soldier, tried for years, is sober, very industrious, and as kind as a child. Yet he has been held up as a criminal, a drunkard, tyrant, and everything horrible."

On December 8th, 1862, Sherman received this message from Grant, who was at army headquarters at Oxford, Mississippi: "I wish you would come over this evening and stay tonight, or come in the morning. I would like to talk with you about this matter." "This matter" about which Grant wished to talk involved the project of capturing Vicksburg, the Confederate stronghold on the Mississippi River. When Sherman arrived at Oxford, Grant told him

that he wished him to make a landing up the Yazoo River north of Vicksburg to capture the city from the rear. Its garrison was small; while Sherman was making his attack, Grant stated that he would endeavor with his troops to keep Pemberton, the Confederate commander in that region, away from Vicksburg. In this attack Sherman could count on the support of the gunboat fleet under the command of Admiral David Porter.

One of Grant's reasons for making this somewhat hurried attack on Vicksburg was his knowledge that Lincoln had given General McClernand permission to raise an army and make an independent attack on Vicksburg. "I feared," wrote Grant, "that delay might bring McClernand, who was his [Sherman's] senior, and who had authority from the President and Secretary of War to exercise that command . . . and independently. I doubted McClernand's fitness, and I had good reason to believe that in forestalling him I was by no means giving offense to those whose authority to command was above both him and me."

On December 29th, 1862, Sherman made his attack at Chickasaw Bayou, nine miles up the Yazoo from Vicksburg, and suffered a bloody repulse. A few days before, the Confederate general Van Dorn had captured Grant's base of supplies at Holly Springs. This cut Grant's communications and he was unable to get word through to Sherman who, when he made his attack, hoped that Grant was already behind the enemy.

From then on until April 16th, when the gunboats and the transports ran the batteries at Vicksburg, the history of the campaign against the city was a succession of always baffled efforts to take the stronghold. When Grant finally decided on the strategy that brought victory, Sherman strongly opposed it. He felt that the proper plan of campaign was not to go down the river and land the army south of Vicksburg, but to come overland from the north. This had been Grant's original plan until his base of supplies was captured at Oxford and Sherman's attack was repulsed at Chickasaw Bayou. Sherman opposed Grant's

plan when the matter was first broached to him so strongly that Rawlins and Wilson agreed that neither would report Sherman's state of mind to Grant.

So intensely did Sherman feel on the subject when he left Grant's headquarters, where the plan had been discussed on the night of April 8th, that he wrote a letter to Rawlins, Grant's adjutant general, suggesting that Grant call on all his corps commanders for their opinions as to the best procedure. He felt that if this were not done and if the proposed plan should not succeed, these commanders might claim that fatal consequence had resulted from the failure to ask their advice. Sherman then went on to outline his favorite plan for an attack overland from the north. Even after Grant's plan of campaign terminated in the capture of Vicksburg, Sherman did not relinquish his conviction that, if Grant had proceeded from the direction of Oxford in January, he could have taken Vicksburg then and spared himself and the army six months of hard work. He says that Grant would not, "for reasons other than military, take any course which looked like a step backward."

Shortly before the beginning of the movement by river against Vicksburg, Sherman sought Grant out and had a private and earnest conversation with him. He told Grant that, in going into the enemy's country with a large river behind him and an enemy holding strongly fortified points above and below, he was voluntarily assuming a position for the attainment of which an enemy would be glad to spend a year of maneuver. He then urged that the army be sent back to Memphis to attack Vicksburg from the north. Grant told him that the country was discouraged by the lack of military success; that voluntary enlistments had ceased throughout most of the North; that a withdrawal to Memphis would greatly discourage the people; that the immediate problem was to achieve a decisive victory; that no progress was being made in any other field; and that he and his army must go on.

Grant says that the country would never have heard about Sherman's opposition to the plan which ended in so

great a success had it not been for Sherman's later statement to a group of distinguished civilians who had come to visit the army: "Grant is entitled to every bit of credit in the campaign. I opposed it; I wrote him a letter about it." This was the letter that Sherman had written to Rawlins; Sherman himself furnished a copy to General Badeau for use in his history of Grant's campaigns.

The strength of Sherman's opposition to the great and successful plan can be judged from these excerpts from his private letters to members of his family: "It is my opinion that we shall never take Vicksburg by operations by river alone . . . I look upon the whole thing as one of the most hazardous and desperate moves of this, or any, war. McClernand's corps has moved down; McPherson will follow and mine comes last. I don't object to this, for I have no faith in the whole plan."

Sherman's subsequent pride in his participation in this engagement is reflected in one of his letters to his brother: "Not a soldier of the Army of the Tennessee but knows the part I have borne in this great drama, and the day will come when that army will speak in a voice that cannot be drowned . . . In the events resulting thus the guiding minds and hands were Grant's, Sherman's, and McPherson's, all natives of Ohio." This was contrary to fact, for Sherman had no right to claim that he had been one of the "guiding minds" in a campaign the plan of which he had so vigorously opposed. Nevertheless, he co-operated loyally and effectively; Grant generously said of him: "His untiring energy and great efficiency during the campaign entitle him to a full share of all the credit due for its success. He could not have done more if the plan had been his own."

Sherman's opposition to Grant's successful plan shows that the brilliant mind can be wrong and the steady, plodding, ordinary mind right. Grant suggests this in his review of the Vicksburg campaign, as quoted by Young:

"Some of our generals failed because they worked out everything by rule. They knew what Frederick did at one place and Napoleon at another. They were always think-

ing about what Napoleon would do. Unfortunately for their plans, the rebels would be thinking about something else. I don't underrate the value of military knowledge, but if men make war in slavish observance of rules they will fail. . . Even Napoleon showed that; for my impression is that his first success came because he made war in his own way, and not in imitation of others."<sup>1</sup>

Sherman was repairing a railroad bridge near Tusculumbia, Alabama, when a dirty, black-haired fellow approached him as he sat on the porch at his headquarters on October 27th, 1863 and handed him this telegram from Grant: "Drop all work on the Memphis and Charleston railroad, cross the Tennessee, and hurry eastward with all possible dispatch towards Bridgeport, till you meet further orders from me." The circumstance which brought this urgent message from Grant was the desperate state of the Union army at Chattanooga. On September 18th and 19th, Bragg's army, reinforced by Longstreet's corps of Lee's army, had broken the Union lines at Chickamauga and driven the army back into Chattanooga. In great anxiety, the government called Grant to the rescue. At Louisville he met Stanton, relieved Rosecrans of command and put Thomas, the hero of Chickamauga, in his place, and himself arrived at Chattanooga on October 23rd.

Sherman was soon on his way towards Chattanooga. The long journey from Memphis with the Army of the Tennessee, hundreds of miles by river and train and then a long, hard march across a hostile country, was concluded on November 13th when Sherman's advance reached Bridgeport on the Tennessee River. He hastened into Chattanooga for an interview with Grant. Grant's face lighted up with a smile when he saw his old friend and chief lieutenant; extending his hand, he complimented Sherman on the rapidity with which he had made his march. Lighting a cigar and handing one to Sherman, Grant pointed to a highback rocking chair and said, "Take the chair of honor, Sherman."

---

<sup>1</sup> Young, *Around the World with General Grant*, Vol. II, p. 352.

“Oh, no,” said Sherman, “that belongs to you, General!”

Thereupon Grant replied, “I don’t forget, Sherman, to give proper respect to age.”

Sherman then yielded; sitting down in the chair, he said, “Well, then, if you put it on that ground, I must accept.”

Grant was then forty-one, Sherman forty-three.

General O. O. Howard, who had come <sup>west</sup> east with the 11th Corps of the Army of the Potomac to reinforce the armies at Chattanooga and who was later to succeed McPherson in command of the Army of the Tennessee, was one of the officers present on this occasion; he gives us this interesting study of the two men:

“My real acquaintance with Sherman began that evening. It was a privilege to see these two men, Grant and Sherman, together. Their unusual friendship—unusual in men who would naturally be rivals—was like that of David and Jonathan. It was always evident, and did not grow from likeness, but from unlikeness. They appeared rather the complements of each other—where the one was especially strong, the other was less so, and vice versa. It was a marriage of characters, in sympathy, by the adjustment of differences.

“Grant in command was, as everybody then said, habitually reticent. Sherman was never so. Grant meditated on the situation, withholding his opinion until his plan was well matured. Sherman quickly, brilliantly, gave you half a dozen.

“Grant appeared more inclined to systematize and simplify; bring up sufficient force to outnumber; do unexpected things; take promptly the offensive; follow up a victory. It was a simple, straightforward calculus, which avoided too much complication. It made Grant the man for campaign and battle. Sherman was always at his best in campaign—in general manoeuvres—better than in actual battle. His great knowledge of history, his topographical scope, his intense suggestive faculties seemed often to be impaired by the actual conflict. And the reason is plain; such a mind and body as his, full of impulse, full of fire, are more likely to be perturbed by excitement than is the more ironbound constitution of a Grant or a Thomas.



"Sherman, patriotic all through, was very self-reliant. He believed in neglecting fractions and was not afraid of responsibility. Grant, probably much influenced by his earliest teachings, relied rather on Providence than simply on himself; he gathered up the fragments for use, and was also strong to dare, because somehow, without saying so, he struck the blows of a persistent faith.

"As I watched the countenance of those two men that evening I gathered hope for our cause. Grant's faculty of gaining the ascendancy over his generals without pretension or assumption then appeared. He chose, then he trusted his leaders. They grew great because he did not desert them even in disaster."

General William Farrar Smith relates that on the evening of Sherman's arrival at Chattanooga in advance of his troops, Grant and a number of general officers dropped in to see him at the headquarters of General Thomas. After a time, says Smith, Sherman brought into the room a bottle of whiskey, which he placed on the table. "I was shocked, for I knew that Sherman must be aware of Grant's weakness and of Rawlins' ceaseless vigilance to keep temptation away. Some of the officers helped themselves, and for a while Grant himself abstained, until I thought the danger was over. He, however, could not endure to the end, but got up and took a drink." Smith was so angry at Sherman that he left the room and went to his own quarters next door. Just as he was getting into bed, Grant came into the room. Previously, Grant had mistakenly entered the room occupied by Smith's staff who were playing cards. They were much frightened at being caught, for they knew of Smith's opposition to their night games. "As soon, however," said Smith, "as they saw his condition, they got over the scare and guided him to my room."<sup>1</sup>

Smith says that he saw Grant under the influence of liquor on only one other occasion during the war. That other time was at Smith's headquarters during the Virginia

---

<sup>1</sup> Smith, William Farrar, manuscript autobiography.

campaign in July of 1864 when Grant and Butler called on him and Grant asked for a drink of whiskey.

When Sherman inspected the lines with Grant the next day and plainly saw the Confederate tents on Missionary Ridge, the trenches running from Lookout Mountain toward Chickamauga, and the sentinels walking their posts not a thousand yards off, he exclaimed, "Why, General Grant, you are besieged." Grant answered, "It is too true." After getting this view of a situation which up to that time he had never considered serious and receiving instructions from Grant, Sherman returned to Bridgeport to hurry his army, himself rowing a boat down the river from Kelly's Ferry.

In spite of his efforts, Sherman did not succeed in bringing his army up by November 21st, the date set by Grant for the attack. This was due to the fact that he brought up his enormous trains and wagons instead of moving the artillery and the troops first. Grant assumed the blame and said he should have given Sherman explicit orders to leave the wagons behind. He was, nevertheless, says Dana, greatly surprised when he learned that the wagons had not been left behind. In the attack on Missionary Ridge on the 25th, Sherman was assigned to turn the right of Bragg's army. However, he was so slow in his movements and Grant was so greatly annoyed by the delay that, had they not been such warm friends or had the attack failed, there probably would have been a break between the two men. This was Wilson's opinion. Sherman had forgotten the principle of military success expressed in the dictum of the Confederate general Ewell, "The road to glory cannot be followed with much baggage."

At three in the afternoon Sherman rested from the attack, but caught a signal from Grant, "Attack again." Astonished at the order, Sherman sent a member of his staff to inquire if there was a mistake. "Keep pounding," was Grant's reply. Sherman then said to his staff officer, "Go signal Grant. The orders were that I should get as many as possible in front of me, and God knows there are enough. They've been reinforcing all day." Shortly thereafter, Grant

peremptorily ordered the slow and obstinate Thomas to make the attack at the center which ended in the rout of Bragg's army.

When Congress revived the grade of lieutenant-general and Grant was nominated for the position, with authority to command all the Union armies, one of his first acts was to thank his two chief lieutenants, Sherman and McPherson. This letter, dated at Nashville on March 4th, 1864, was addressed to Sherman but was intended, as Grant says, for McPherson also:

"The bill reviving the grade of Lieutenant-General in the army has become a law, and my name has been sent to the Senate for the place.

"I now receive orders to report at Washington immediately, *in person*, which indicates either a confirmation or a likelihood of confirmation. I start in the morning to comply with the order, but I shall say very distinctly on my arrival there that I shall accept no appointment which will require me to make that city my headquarters. This, however, is not what I started out to write about.

"While I have been eminently successful in this war, in at least gaining the confidence of the public, no one feels more than I how much of this success is due to the energy, skill, and the harmonious putting forth of that energy and skill, of those whom it has been my good fortune to have occupying subordinate positions under me.

"There are many officers to whom these remarks are applicable to a greater or less degree, proportionate to their ability as soldiers; but what I want is to express my thanks to you and McPherson, as *the men* to whom, above all others, I feel indebted for whatever I have had of success. How far your advice and suggestions have been of assistance, you know. How far your execution of whatever has been given you to do entitles you to the reward I am receiving, you cannot know as well as I do. I feel all the gratitude this letter would express, giving it the most flattering construction.

"The word *you* I use in the plural, intending it for McPherson also. I should write to him, and will some day,

but, starting in the morning, I do not know that I will find time just now."

To this noble letter Sherman responded with one no less worthy of praise and fame:

"I have your more than kind and characteristic letter of the 4th, and will send a copy of it to General McPherson at once.

"You do yourself injustice and us too much honor in assigning to us so large a share of the merits which have led to your high advancement. I know you approve the friendship I have ever professed to you, and will permit me to continue as heretofore to manifest it on all proper occasions.

"You are now Washington's legitimate successor, and occupy a position of almost dangerous elevation; but if you can continue as heretofore to be yourself, simple, honest, and unpretending, you will enjoy through life the respect and love of friends, and the homage of millions of human beings who will award to you a large share for securing to them and their descendants a government of law and stability.

"I repeat, you do General McPherson and myself too much honor. At Belmont you manifested your traits, neither of us being near; at Donelson also you illustrated your whole character. I was not near, and General McPherson in too subordinate a capacity to influence you.

"Until you had won Donelson, I confess I was almost cowed by the terrible array of anarchical elements that presented themselves at every point; but that victory admitted the ray of light which I have followed ever since.

"I believe you are as brave, patriotic, and just, as the great prototype Washington; as unselfish, kind-hearted, and honest, as a man should be; but the chief characteristic in your nature is the simple faith in success you have always manifested, which I can liken to nothing else than the faith a Christian has in his Saviour.

"My only points of doubt were as to your knowledge of grand strategy and of books of science and history; but I confess your common-sense seems to have supplied all this.

"Now as to the future. Do not stay in Washington. Halleck is better qualified than you are to stand the buffets of intrigue and policy. Come out West; take to yourself the whole Mississippi Valley; let us make it dead-sure, and I tell you the Atlantic slope and Pacific shores will follow its destiny as sure as the limbs of a tree live or die with the main trunk! We have done much; still much remains to be done. Time and time's influences are all with us; we could almost afford to sit still and let these influences work. Even in the seceded States your word *now* would go further than a President's proclamation, or an act of Congress.

"For God's sake and for your country's sake, come out of Washington! I foretold to General Halleck, before he left Corinth, the inevitable result to him, and I now exhort you to come out West. Here lies the seat of the coming empire; and from the West, when our task is done, we will make short work of Charleston and Richmond, and the impoverished coast of the Atlantic."

These two letters are worthy monuments to Grant and his great captain.

In his letter Sherman advised Grant to remain with the western armies on the theory that the conquest of the Mississippi Valley was a necessary prelude to the subjugation of the rest of the country. He had doubts, too, as to Grant's strength to stand against the machinations and difficulties which would confront him if he led in person the eastern armies. Badeau quotes Sherman as saying:

"Here you are at home; you are acquainted with your ground; you have tested your subordinates; you know us, and we know you. Here you are sure of success; here, too, you will be untrammelled. At the East, you must begin new campaigns in an unfamiliar field, with troops and officers whom you have not tried, whom you have never led to victory. They cannot feel toward you as we do. Near Washington, besides, you will be beset, and, it may be, fettered by scheming politicians. Stay here, where you have made your fame, and use the same means to consolidate it."

Sherman's advice was contrary to the counsel of Rawlins,

Bowers, and Wilson, who were almost equally close to Grant. They all recognized from the first that, as general-in-chief of all the armies of the United States, Grant must meet the yet unconquered Lee and fight the final duel. There can be no doubt that their view, not Sherman's, was correct from both a military and a political standpoint.

On March 18th, 1864, Sherman replaced Grant as commander of the Military Division of the Mississippi; this embraced the departments and the armies of the Ohio, Cumberland, Tennessee, and Arkansas, commanded respectively by Generals Schofield, Thomas, McPherson, and Steele. When Grant arrived at Washington to receive his new commission, he informed the government of his wish to have Sherman succeed him in the West and to lead the campaign in Georgia. At that time Sherman was not yet widely known; he was remembered primarily for his failure at Chickasaw Bluff in the Vicksburg campaign and for his rumored insanity early in the war. There was, therefore, an understandable reluctance to give him the second command in the nation. Even Halleck, always Sherman's friend and backer, expressed doubt as to Sherman's fitness for the place, but Grant urged the appointment and said he would stake his own reputation upon Sherman's success.

Before Grant started east to take command in the field of the Army of the Potomac, a delegation arrived from Galena, Illinois to present their famous fellow townsman with a sword, sash, and spurs. All this lay in a rosewood box on a table. Less than three years before, Grant, who was now the recipient of costly swords from people in all parts of the country, was compelled to borrow five hundred dollars from a friend at Galena to purchase a horse, sword, and uniform. Mrs. Grant, their daughter Nellie, one of the sons, and members of Grant's staff, as well as Sherman, were present at this ceremony. The mayor of Galena made a presentation speech and read the engrossed resolutions of the city council. When he had finished, Grant said, "Mr. Mayor, as I knew that this ceremony was to occur, and as I am not used to speaking, I have written something in reply."

He fumbled through all the pockets of his coat, trousers, and vest, finally pulling out a crumpled piece of yellow cartridge paper which he handed to the mayor to read. "His whole manner," says Sherman, "was awkward in the extreme, yet perfectly characteristic, and in strong contrast with the elegant parchment and speech of the Mayor . . . I could not help laughing at a scene so characteristic of the man who then stood prominent before the country, and to whom all had turned as the only one qualified to guide the nation in a war that had become painfully critical."

Sherman accompanied Grant on his way east as far as Cincinnati. They talked together of the great campaign soon to open in both theaters of the war and discussed the possibility of restoring to active service such distinguished officers as McClellan, Frémont, Buell, Crittenden, and others "who had, by the force of events, drifted into inactivity and discontent." Grant wished Sherman to bear in mind particularly Buell, McCook, and Crittenden, but he was not to take any steps until he heard further from his superior, who would have to consult the Secretary of War. The desire to have the highly intelligent Buell back in service shows Grant's magnanimity, for Buell had been anything but complimentary in his report of the battle of Shiloh where, according to the claims of Grant's enemies, Buell had turned disaster into victory by his timely arrival. Sherman never heard from Grant again on the matter, and he supposed that the vindictive Stanton had refused to consent to re-employ these able generals. Many years later, commenting on the subject on his trip around the world, Grant revealed that it was not Stanton who stood in the way, but the fact that the generals themselves "were not in a humor to be conciliated." Grant and Sherman parted at Cincinnati on a bleak March day in 1864, each to go his way and not to meet again until March 27th, 1865 at Grant's headquarters at City Point, Virginia when the end of the great struggle was at hand.

The contrast between these two remarkable men was in every way most striking. Sherman was tall, angular, thin, and sharp-featured, with sandy hair and flashing gray eyes.

His speech was rapid and reinforced with constant gesticulation. His mind was always crowded with ideas which he expressed eagerly and quickly, both in speech and in writing. Grant was two years younger than Sherman and shorter and stouter. His hair and beard were much heavier, and his eye "seemed formed rather to resist than aid the interpretation of his thought and never betrayed that it was sounding the depths of another nature than its own." Grant had a formidable heavy-set jaw and a broad, square brow; his shoulders were slightly stooped. In ordinary speech he was slow and somewhat embarrassed, but both in speech and in writing he never left any doubt of the idea he meant to convey. "The whole was a marvel of simplicity, a powerful nature veiled in the plainest possible exterior, imposing on all but the acutest judges of character or the constant companions of his unguarded hours." No man ever had less show or display about him. "In battle, however, the sphinx awoke, the riddle was solved, the outward calm, indeed, was not even then entirely broken. But the utterance was prompt, the ideas were rapid, the judgment was decisive. The words were those of command. The whole man became intense, as it were, with a white heat. His nature, indeed, seemed like a sword drawn only in the field or in emergencies. At ordinary times a scabbard concealed the sharpness and temper of the blade; but when this was thrown aside, amid the smoke and din of battle the weapon flashed and thrust and smote—and won."<sup>1</sup> Never were two so dissimilar men ever associated in a great military enterprise. Grant was charmed, interested, and fascinated by Sherman. Sherman relied confidently in the strength and judgment of his superior. They were both great patriots and both men of generous and magnanimous nature. Had they been otherwise, they could hardly have gone through the remaining year of the war without jealousy and without a break.

On May 5th, 1864, Grant watched the Army of the Potomac march down the road to Germana Ford on the

---

<sup>1</sup> Badeau, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 22.



Rapidan River in Virginia and disappear into the tangles of the Wilderness. On that same day, leading his three splendid armies of the Ohio, the Tennessee, and the Cumberland, Sherman rode out from Chattanooga to Ringgold, Georgia. It was a great day for America when those two generals led their armies southward to meet the full force of the Confederacy.

The objective of Sherman's campaign was the Confederate army under Joseph E. Johnston. So Grant had written to Sherman from Washington: "You I propose to move against Johnston's army, to break it up, and to get into the interior of the enemy's country as far as you can, inflicting all the damage you can against their war resources." Sherman answered that he thoroughly understood Grant's tactics and that he would not permit "side issues" to distract him from the main plan, which was "to knock Joe Johnston and do as much damage to the resources of the enemy as possible." He promised Grant that on the march into Georgia he would inspire his command with the feeling that "beef and salt are all that is necessary to life, and that parched corn once fed General Jackson's army on that very ground." This was a reference to Jackson's campaign against the Creek Indians in 1815.

Perhaps the only recorded instance of an expression of jealousy on the part of Sherman toward Grant occurred in connection with the battle of Kenesaw Mountain. General John A. Logan told Don Piatt, author of *Men Who Saved the Union*, that Sherman was at McPherson's tent the night before the battle reading a newspaper account of the movements of the Army of the Potomac under Grant. Looking up from the paper, Sherman said the whole attention of the country was fixed on the Army of the Potomac and that his own force was forgotten. He added that his army would now fight and that he would order the assault on the morrow. McPherson replied that a costly and dangerous attack was not necessary and that Johnston could be outflanked. Sherman, however, contended that the assault was necessary to demonstrate that his army could fight as well as Grant's.

When he received the news of the capture of Atlanta, the magnanimous Grant telegraphed Sherman: "I have just received your dispatch announcing the capture of Atlanta. In honor of your great victory, I have ordered a salute to be fired with *shotted* guns from every battery bearing upon the enemy. The salute will be fired within an hour, amid great rejoicing."

When Sherman decided to cut loose from Atlanta and march eastward towards the sea while Hood was leading the Confederate army northwest into Tennessee, Grant expressed some anxiety and, at Lincoln's request, asked Sherman to suspend his march for a few days. Later, however, he reassured the President that Sherman's plan was good and that such an army under such a commander was hard to corner or to capture. Grant gave Sherman full credit for the famous march: "The question of who devised the plan of march from Atlanta to Savannah is easily answered: it was clearly Sherman, and to him also belongs the credit of its brilliant execution."

Sherman's generalship, in contrast with that of Grant, was influenced more by geographical than military objectives. This is shown in his Atlanta campaign: he took Atlanta, but let Hood's army escape into Tennessee. It is also evident in the Savannah campaign: he captured the city but permitted the Confederate army to elude him. Grant, on the contrary, always made the enemy's army, rather than his territory, the chief objective.

Although Sherman's campaign from Atlanta to the sea, cutting loose from his base with a powerful army in his rear, was a daring enterprise, and one that gave no little anxiety to the government, the fact is that Sherman, in contrast with Grant, lacked boldness. He fought numerous engagements, but never seemed willing to stake all on one mighty blow. Two of his chief lieutenants point out this lack in Sherman's generalship. General D. S. Stanley said: "General Sherman never fought a battle, though he had a thousand chances. Partial affairs called battles he fought; but it was always by a fragment of his army. He never had

the moral courage to order his whole army into an engagement."<sup>1</sup> General Schofield, who commanded the Army of the Ohio under Sherman, speaks in a like manner: "He lacked the element of confidential boldness, or audacity in action, which is necessary to gain the greatest results."

When General James H. Wilson visited Sherman's headquarters in October of 1864, Sherman admirably contrasted Grant's generalship with his own. With the glow of the campfire about which they were sitting lighting up his unusual features, Sherman said:

"Wilson, I am a damn sight smarter than Grant. I know a great deal more about war, military history, strategy, and grand tactics than he does; I know more about organization, supply, and administration, and about everything else than he does. But I tell you where he beats me, and where he beats the world. He don't care a damn for what the enemy does out of his sight, but it scares me like hell. . . . I am more nervous than he is. I am more likely to change my orders, or to countermarch my command than he is. He uses such information as he has, according to his best judgment. He issues his orders and does his level best to carry them out without much reference to what is going on about him. And, so far, experience seems to have fully justified."

A short time before Wilson's visit to Sherman, Horace Porter of Grant's staff called at his headquarters at Atlanta. He furnishes some of the best available snapshots of Sherman: "As I approached I saw the capturer of Atlanta on the porch, sitting tilted back in a large arm chair, reading the newspaper. His coat was unbuttoned, his black felt hat slouched over his brow, and on his feet were a pair of slippers, very much down at the heels. With his large frame, tall gaunt form, restless hazel eyes, aquiline nose, bronze face, and crisp ears, he looked the picture of grim-visaged war." It was on this occasion that Sherman, speaking of Grant's forward thrust after the first battles of the Wilderness, said to Porter: "When Grant cried 'forward' after the Battle

---

<sup>1</sup> Stanley, *Personal Memoirs*, 182.

of the Wilderness, I said, "This is the grandest act of his life. Now I feel that the rebellion will be crushed.'"

After Sherman's triumphant march to Savannah, a bill was introduced in Congress to raise Sherman also to the rank of lieutenant-general; there were not a few who contended that Sherman should be made general-in-chief. Hearing of this, Sherman wrote Grant:

"I have been told that Congress meditates a bill to make another lieutenant-general for me. I have written to John Sherman to stop it, if it is designed for me. It would be mischievous, for there are enough rascals who would try to sow differences between us, whereas you and I now are in perfect understanding. I would rather have you in command than anybody else, for you are fair, honest, and have at heart the same purpose that should animate all. I should emphatically decline any commission calculated to bring us into rivalry; and I ask you to advise all your friends in Congress to this effect, especially Mr. Washburne. I doubt if men in Congress full realize that you and I are honest in our professions of want of ambition. I know I feel none, and today will gladly surrender my position and influence to any other who is better able to wield the power. The flurry attending my recent success will soon blow over, and give place to new developments."

To this Grant replied:

"I have received your very kind letter, in which you say you would decline, or are opposed to, promotion. No one would be more pleased at your advancement than I; and, if you should be placed in my position, and I put subordinate, it would not change our relations in the least. I would make the same exertions to support you that you have ever done to support me, and I would do all in my power to make our cause win."

On March 27th, 1865 Sherman, who had led his army from Savannah to Goldsboro, North Carolina, walked into Grant's log cabin at City Point. A year had elapsed since the two men parted at Cincinnati when Grant was on his way to Washington to take command of the Army of the Potomac. Lincoln had come down to City Point on the steamer *City*

*River*

*Queen*, and Grant took Sherman down to call on the President. Lincoln was greatly delighted with Sherman's account of the exploits of his "bummers" on the march through Georgia. The next day, at a longer interview, Lincoln, distressed at the thought of more bloodshed, asked his generals if another battle could not be avoided. Sherman said that depended upon the enemy, and that both Jeff Davis and General Lee would be forced to fight one more desperate and bloody encounter. It was at this interview that Lincoln assured Sherman that he was prepared to reorganize civil affairs in the South as soon as the war terminated. It was on the strength of this interview that Sherman, in formulating the terms for the surrender of Johnston's army at Durham, North Carolina, stipulated that the arms of the Confederates were to be deposited at the State Houses of the different states, that a general amnesty would be proclaimed, and that the state governments would be recognized when they took the oath of allegiance to the United States.<sup>1</sup> These terms applied not only to Johnston's army, but to other armies still in the field.

These extraordinary provisions occasioned the greatest excitement and anger at Washington and were quickly repudiated by the government. Before he started on the march to the sea Sherman had written his wife: "In revolutions men rise and fall. Long before this war is over, much as you may hear me praised now, you may hear me cursed and insulted." That prediction now came true. Sherman was excoriated and denounced; Stanton published the terms in the newspapers as if he were unmasking a traitor. Union

---

<sup>1</sup>The testimony of Admiral David Porter, who took notes at the conference on *The River Queen*, emphatically supports Sherman's claim that the terms he gave General Johnston were in line with the sentiments expressed by Lincoln. In 1866 Porter wrote out the notes of his interview and sent them to Sherman. In these notes he says that Lincoln wanted Johnston's army surrendered "on any terms," and that he "would have given Johnston twice as much if he had asked for it." When the storm of angry abuse broke over Sherman's head, Lincoln's lips were sealed in death; Porter was certain, however, that had Lincoln been alive, he would have "shouldered the whole responsibility" for Sherman's terms with Johnston.

officers in the South were directed to disregard Sherman's orders, and Grant was instructed to proceed at once to North Carolina and press the campaign against Johnston.

Grant was at his best in that critical hour. Instead of publicly humiliating his old friend, he slipped quietly and unknown into Sherman's headquarters at Raleigh, told him of the government's rejection of the terms, and advised him to notify Johnston of the cessation of the armistice and to demand the immediate surrender of his army. This done, he withdrew, declining Sherman's invitation to be present at the interview with Johnston, and returned to Washington. Within a few days Sherman learned of Stanton's action and of Halleck's instructions to ignore his orders; his mortification and rage knew no bounds. The newspapers commented that, with a few strokes of his pen, he had blurred all the triumphs of his sword and that the terms he had offered Johnston could be explained only on the ground of stark insanity. All of this criticism provoked Sherman into writing his commander two letters which Grant directed his military secretary, Badeau, to seal and never to reveal to any human being without his leave.

On one of these letters, dated May 10th, 1865 from camp opposite Richmond, General Badeau had written, "Highly important and strictly confidential letter from General Sherman to General Grant, of May 1865, not to be used." In this letter Sherman tells Grant of his plan to march through Richmond on May 11th, and that he has advised General Halleck "to keep out of sight, lest he should be insulted." Of Stanton he says:

"I will treat Mr. Stanton with like scorn and contempt unless you have reasons otherwise; for I regard my military career as ended. . . I ask you to vindicate my name from the insult conveyed in Mr. Stanton's dispatch to Governor Dix of April 27th, published in all the newspapers of the land. If you do not, I will. No man shall insult me with impunity, even if I am an officer of the army. Subordination to authority is one thing, to insult another. No amount of retraction or pusillanimous excusing will do. Mr. Stanton must publicly confess himself a

common libeler or — but I won't threaten. . . He seeks your life as well as mine. Beware; but you are cool, and have been most skillful in managing such people, and I have faith you will penetrate his designs. Excuse this letter. Burn it, but heed my kindly counsel. The lust for power in political minds is the strongest passion of life, and impels ambitious men (Richard III) to deeds of infamy."

So intemperate were Sherman's utterances with regard to Stanton and the government when he brought his army to Washington that his brother-in-law, Hugh B. Ewing, persuaded Senator John Sherman to visit Sherman's camp to quiet him and counsel moderation. Writing to his intimate friend, General James H. Wilson, at the time of Sherman's explosion over Stanton's repudiation of his terms of peace with Johnston, Charles A. Dana said: "I am sorry for it on his account, but I cannot say that I really regret, on account of the country, the events which have taken him out of the category of possible candidates for the presidency." In Dana's opinion, Sherman's outburst of wrath and his intemperate abuse of Stanton showed that he was unfitted for the highest office.

Sherman took his revenge on Stanton when he marched his army down Pennsylvania Avenue on May 24th. After riding past the reviewing stand at the head of his men, Sherman dismounted and ascended the stand; here he was greeted by President Johnson, General Grant and others. When Stanton extended his hand, Sherman turned away, saying as he did so, "I do not care to shake hands with clerks."<sup>1</sup> To Sherman's credit let it be said that he was later reconciled to Stanton and went to call on him in his last illness.

When Grant became President in March of 1869, one of his first acts was to name Sherman to the rank of full

---

<sup>1</sup> Ben Perley Poore thus relates the incident in his *Reminiscences*, and Sherman recalls it boastfully in his *Memoirs*. On the other hand, Charles A. Dana, who was present on the reviewing stand, states that Stanton did not extend his hand but merely made a formal bow when Sherman appeared.

general; Sheridan he elevated to the rank of lieutenant-general in Sherman's place. Sheridan's promotion deeply wounded both Thomas and Meade. Sherman called on Thomas, whom he had known for more than thirty years, to persuade him to accompany him on a visit to Grant, but Thomas was not to be placated. When Sherman discussed the matter with the new President, Grant assured him that, while he respected Thomas and loved him as a man, he could not recede from his action with respect to Sheridan. Thomas died soon afterwards at San Francisco, his end hastened by brooding over what he regarded as an act of ingratitude and injustice.

The day before Grant moved into the White House, a committee of citizens who were friends of both generals met Grant and Sherman at the former's office at the War Department and handed Grant a check for sixty-five thousand dollars. Grant then handed over the deed to his house on I Street and the committee handed the deed to Sherman. The house of his former chief was now his own through the generosity of these friends.

The only cloud ever to overhang the friendship of Grant and Sherman arose when the latter's *Memoirs* were published in 1875. One of Grant's friends remarked to him, "Why, General, you won't find much in it about yourself. Sherman doesn't seem to think you were in the war." General Edward Boynton had written a review of the book, in the quoted excerpts from which Sherman was made to disparage his comrades, Grant in particular. "I cannot tell you how much," said Grant, "I was shocked; but there were the letters and the extracts. I could not believe it in Sherman, the man whom I had always found so true and knightly, more anxious to honor others than win honor for himself. So I sent for the book, and resolved to read it over with paper and pencil, and make careful notes, and in justice to my comrades and myself prepare a reply. I do not think I ever ventured on a more painful duty."

When Grant finished the book, he approved of almost everything Sherman had written. He disagreed only with



Sherman's criticism of the civilian soldiers, Logan and Blair. He thought, also, that Sherman had not done justice to Burnside, and said he was mistaken in attributing the suggestion for the Fort Henry and Fort Donelson campaign to Halleck.

After the war Sherman was greatly embarrassed by the publication of a letter he had written to a Robert N. Scott, and which Scott had sent to General James B. Fry. In this letter Sherman had written: "Now as to Halleck and Grant, I had the highest possible opinion of Halleck's knowledge and power, and had never blamed him for mistrusting Grant's ability. Had C. F. Smith lived, Grant would have disappeared to history after Donelson. Smith was a strong, nervous, vigorous man when I reported to him in person at Fort Henry."

Sherman at first denied that he had ever written such words, but presentation of the evidence forced him to confess. He then stated that General Fry had no right to quote from the letter without his leave and that, if Fry had asked such permission, he would have changed the sentence, "*Would* have disappeared to history after Donelson," to "*might*," or "*probably*". Nor was this altogether unlikely, for as Sherman wrote, "Chance is an important factor in the race of glory."

Grant received no help from Sherman when he sought the nomination for a third term in 1880. Sherman would say no word in favor of the project, one of the chief backers of which was one of his old generals, John A. Logan. Nevertheless, he remained always the faithful friend. At the time of the failure of Grant's firm, Grant & Ward, small creditors attempted to levy on swords and other gifts which had been presented to Grant. In order to save them, William Vanderbilt, who had loaned Grant a hundred thousand dollars, moved to enforce his own prior claim. When Sherman heard of this, he went to call on Badeau in New York and declared Grant must not be allowed to suffer this new disgrace. Sooner than that, he declared he would share his own income with him.

Sherman assured his friend, Senator Vilas of Wisconsin, that he need have no fear that he would duplicate Grant's mistake of "placing his war fame in a banking venture as part of its capital." "I aim to be content with what I have; but he aimed to rival the millionaires, who would have given their all to have won any of his battles." Sherman frequently called on Grant during his last illness; Grant said that these visits, and the talk of their old days together at Shiloh, Vicksburg, and Chattanooga did him more good than all his physicians. Sherman's happiest days were those when he walked in on a reunion of the Army of the Tennessee, Cumberland, or Ohio, while the veterans whom he had led through the woods of Georgia and the swamps of the Carolinas shouted and wept over their "Uncle Billy."

On August 8th, 1885, Sherman followed the catafalque of Grant up Fifth Avenue to its resting place on Riverside Drive. Sheridan and Hancock rode before Grant's bier; Sherman, Logan, and Porter followed it. Six years later, on February 18th, 1891, Sherman himself was borne down the avenue. Before the caisson on which his body lay rode his old generals: Howard, commander of the Army of the Tennessee; Schofield, commander of the Army of the Ohio; and Slocum, Dodge, and Corse, the hero of Allatoona Pass, to whom Sherman heliographed his famous message, "Hold the fort, I am coming!" With these Union generals rode Sherman's old foe, General Joseph E. Johnston.

When the funeral train was on its way to St. Louis, at a lonely place along the route a ragged veteran of Sherman's army emerged from his wretched hut; as the train passed by, he stood stiffly erect and brought his musket to the "present." That salute by the solitary veteran in the forest wilderness to his old chieftain was a greater tribute to Sherman than the New York procession with the generals riding behind and before his catafalque.

## Grant and His Commander-in-Chief

**A**braham Lincoln made one of his most important decisions as commander-in-chief when, despite popular outcry and the insistence of prominent members of both political parties, he refused to dismiss Grant from his command after the battle of Shiloh in April of 1862. That decision was fraught with momentous consequences for the army and for the nation.

In common with most of his fellow-Americans, Grant first heard of Lincoln during the Lincoln-Douglas Debates of 1858. Grant was then living near St. Louis, battling personal adversity. He characterized himself at that time as "by no means a Lincoln man"; from this one may deduce that he was strongly opposed to the position espoused by Lincoln in his contest with Douglas. By 1860, however, when Lincoln was the Republican candidate for the Presidency and threats of secession were heard in the South, Grant's opposition to Lincoln had subsided. As he had lived in Illinois less than a year, he was not able to vote in the election. He later said that this situation pleased him, for "his pledges would have compelled him to vote for Douglas," whose chances of election he considered poor. Of the other two candidates, Lincoln and Breckinridge, he favored the former. He did not parade, in conformance

with the prevalent custom, with the adherents of either party, but did meet with the "Wide Awakes," or Republicans, and superintended their drills at Galena.

On only two occasions did Grant and Lincoln come into direct conflict over military policy; in both instances the divergence was over the question of trading with the enemy. In the first, Grant yielded to Lincoln; in the second, Lincoln accepted Grant's viewpoint. Grant strongly opposed issuing permits to traders, especially to those who wished to deal in cotton. He was against the policy of paying for cotton in gold at authorized stations on the Mississippi River and on the railroads; he took the ground that the Confederates thus obtained money which was good all over the world, that in this way the enemy obtained information regarding the position and strength of the Union army, and that the entire proceeding was demoralizing to the troops. "Men who had enlisted to fight the battles of their country did not like to be engaged in protecting a traffic which went to the support of an enemy they had to fight and the profits of which went to men who shared none of their dangers."

As early as November 9th, 1862, General Grant ordered Major-General Hurlbut at Jackson, Tennessee to refuse all permits to travel south of that city, and added, "The Israelites especially should be kept out." The next day Grant instructed General Webster, also stationed at Jackson, to give orders to all railroad conductors "that no Jews are to be permitted to travel on the railroad southward from any point. They may go north, and be encouraged in it; but they are such an intolerable nuisance that the Department must be purged of them."

This was followed by Grant's General Order No. 11, issued by his adjutant Rawlins at the Holly Springs, Mississippi headquarters on December 17th, 1862: "The Jews as a class violating every regulation of trade established by the Treasury Department, and also department orders, are hereby expelled from the department within twenty-four

hours from receipt of this order. . . ."<sup>1</sup> This order not only expelled unscrupulous Jewish traders from the army posts, but worked hardship upon worthy Jewish merchants doing business within the areas of those posts. Almost immediately, three Jewish merchants at Paducah, Kentucky, appealed to the President. Lincoln acted at once; on January 4th, 1864, Halleck, then commanding general, telegraphed Grant as follows: "A paper purporting to be General Orders No. 11 issued by you December 17 has been presented here. By its terms it expels all Jews from your Department. If such an order has been issued, it will be immediately revoked." Three days later, on January 7th, Grant obeyed the order from Halleck and revoked his edict. In a letter written to Grant two weeks later, Halleck tempered somewhat the brusqueness of his telegram: "It may be proper to give you some explanation of the revocation of the order expelling all Jews from your Department. The President has no objection to your expelling traders, and Jew peddlers, which I suppose was the object of your order; but as it in terms proscribed an entire religious class, some of whom are fighting in our ranks, the President deemed it necessary to revoke it."

Grant clashed with Lincoln a second time over the same issue during the Virginia campaign of 1864. Lincoln had granted permits and passes to Joseph Maddox of Maryland and General James W. Singleton of Illinois to enable them to bring cotton and other products from Virginia. When Elihu Washburne learned that these licenses had been issued, he remonstrated with the President, threatening to have Grant countermand the warrants if Lincoln himself did not revoke them. Much irritated, the President stated his conviction that Grant would never take upon himself

---

<sup>1</sup> Grant's father, Jesse R. Grant, claimed that this order, "so much harped on in Congress", was issued on "express instruction from Washington." Letter to Washburne, January 20, 1863. Dr. John Philip Newman in his funeral sermon for Grant made the same claim. But Grant's orders of November and December, 1862 to Hurlbut and Webster, and his letter to Walcott, Assistant Secretary of War, make it clear that the order originated with himself. *O. R.*, Series 1, vol. 17, pt. 2, pp. 421-424.

the responsibility of revoking a Presidential permit. To this Washburne replied, as he left the President: "I will show you, sir! I will show you whether Grant will do it or not!" Washburne left Washington for Grant's headquarters by the next boat. In a few days Maddox and Singleton both returned from Virginia; Grant had countermanded the permits.

This incident reveals the power of Washburne's influence over Grant, but the Secretary of War, Stanton, also played a part in nullifying Lincoln's action. He wrote to Grant reminding him that he had been given authority to countermand any permit of that nature, even one signed by the President himself.

Lincoln, humble though he was, was greatly mortified and greatly surprised, but made no attempt to enforce his order, merely remarking to Lamon: "I wonder when Grant changed his mind on this subject. He was the first man after the commencement of the War to grant a permit for the passage of cotton through the lines, and that to his own father." In another later comment on this matter to Lamon, Lincoln said: "It made me feel my insignificance keenly at the moment. But if my friends, Washburne, Henry Wilson, and others derived pleasure from so unworthy a victory over me, I leave them to its full enjoyment."

Grant's first three victories in the West—at Belmont in November of 1861, at Fort Henry and Fort Donelson in February of 1862, and at Shiloh in April of 1862—evoked no message of thanks or congratulation from Lincoln. Fort Donelson was the first important victory won by a northern army in the war. It thrilled the country. Although people everywhere sang the praises of "Unconditional Surrender" Grant, Lincoln sent no message to the victorious commander. Shortly after the battle of Shiloh, when rumors and complaints were rife about Grant's management of that conflict, Lincoln ordered Stanton, the Secretary of War, to telegraph Halleck as follows: "The President desires to know why you have made no official report to this Department respecting the late battle at Pittsburg Landing [Shiloh],

and whether any neglect or misconduct of General Grant, or any other officer, contributed to the sad casualties that befell our forces on Sunday.”

Not only was there a popular cry for Grant's removal after Shiloh, but many of Lincoln's closest friends, such as Leonard Swett and Ward Lamon, were distressed by what they considered Lincoln's injustice to himself in not superseding this commander. The officer who had been hailed as the "Man of Destiny" after the capture of Fort Donelson was now denounced as an incompetent winebibber and a military accident.

Lincoln was as wise in his method of retaining Grant's services as he was in resisting the popular clamor for his dismissal. On April 30th, 1862, when the popular feeling against Grant had somewhat subsided, Lincoln ordered Halleck, who was in command of that department, to join Grant's army, and gave directions that Grant was to serve "as second in command under the Major-General commanding the Department." This was an unusual order: except as to rank, there is no "second in command" when an army has a commanding officer. It was Lincoln's evident purpose to retain Grant with the Army of the Tennessee, and his order to Halleck to take the field with that army was designed to allay popular feeling against Grant. In due course, Lincoln called Halleck to Washington as general-in-chief, with the result that Grant was once more left in command of his army. However adroit a move on the President's part, it would have failed of its purpose had it not been for Sherman's intervention and appeal to Grant; smarting under the humiliation of being the titular commander of an army yet unable to give it orders. Grant had determined to resign his commission.

Lincoln's first communication to Grant was written on October 8th, 1862, after the battle of Iuka. In this letter Lincoln said: "I congratulate you and all concerned in your recent battles and victories. How does it all sum up? I especially regret the death of General Hackelman and am very anxious to know the condition of General Oglesby,

June 2 / 1863 / 71 244  
who is an intimate personal friend." With the exception of a letter of congratulation after the fall of Vicksburg, this was Lincoln's only communication to Grant during almost two and a half years of war, although he had, from the time of the battle of Belmont in November of 1861 until the fall of Vicksburg, been one of the most prominent commanders of the Union Army. In strange contrast were Lincoln's frequent messages, letters, and telegrams to McClellan, Burnside, Hooker, and Halleck. If we seek an explanation for this difference, it may perhaps be found in the fact that, however much he admired Grant for his fighting qualities, Lincoln was not altogether certain that he would develop outstanding capacity for leadership, and therefore hesitated to enter into a more intimate relationship. Whatever the reasons, the lack of communication between the two men is remarkable.

Two other occurrences appear altogether inconsistent by contrast with Lincoln's loyalty to Grant after Shiloh. One is Lincoln's amazing offer of Grant's command to Butler after the latter had been relieved at New Orleans. To his credit, Butler, smarting under what he believed the injustice of being replaced by General Banks, declined to be a party to what he considered an injustice to Grant.

The other fact revealing Lincoln's attitude toward Grant at this time is no less strange. This consisted of a plan to have McClernand, whom he regarded as more capable than either Grant or Sherman, command the expedition against Vicksburg. Lincoln was undoubtedly embarrassed by the semi-secret commission he had given McClernand to raise troops in the Mississippi Valley and attack the fortress of Vicksburg. However, the fact that Grant, and not McClernand, finally led the army in that important campaign was due to no act of Lincoln's, but to two other factors. One was Halleck's determination, in one of the few wise decisions he made as commanding general, to support Grant as the more capable strategist. The other was Grant's quick and decisive action in forestalling McCler-



nand by sending Sherman to make the assault and later taking command of the expedition himself.

Lincoln's retention of confidence in Grant during the long operations against Vicksburg was due in no small degree to the reports sent to Washington by Charles A. Dana, who had been appointed in March of 1863 as the War Department's special representative with Grant's army. Lincoln, having some knowledge of the Mississippi, favored the plan to cut a canal a mile long from Young's Point to the river below Vicksburg whereby Grant could overcome the formidable defenses of the city. Although Grant never had much faith in this project, he allowed his soldiers to work at it until its impracticability was demonstrated. Adding to the difficulties of navigation, the Confederates quickly established a battery which commanded the full length of the canal.

In spite of the long delay, and the many reverses which Grant encountered in his movements against Vicksburg, Lincoln had increasing confidence in the ultimate success of his operations. In a letter to his old friend, Isaac N. Arnold, who had advised him to dispense with Halleck as commanding general, Lincoln said:

"And now, my old friend, let me turn your eyes upon another point. Whether General Grant shall or shall not consummate the capture of Vicksburg, his campaign from the beginning of this month up to the twenty-second day of it is one of the most brilliant in the world. His corps commanders and division commanders, in part, are McClelland, McPherson, Sherman, Steele, Hovey, Blair, and Logan. And yet taking Grant and these seven of his generals, and you can hardly name one of them that has not been constantly denounced and deposed by the same men who are now so anxious to get Halleck out."

Among those who came to see Lincoln to importune him to dismiss Grant toward the end of the Vicksburg campaign was the powerful radical senator from Ohio, Benjamin Wade. In response to something that Wade had said in the interview, Lincoln remarked, "Senator, that reminds me of a story." Wade, who was one of the many

able and patriotic men whom Lincoln's storytelling irritated, impatiently replied, "Yes, yes, it is with you all story, story. You are the father of every military blunder that has been made during the war. You are on the road to hell, sir, with this government, by your obstinacy; and you are not a mile off at this minute." With a smile Lincoln answered, "Senator, that is just about the distance from here to the Capitol, is it not?" Whereupon the angry and discomfited Wade took up his hat and cane and departed. It was during this period that Lincoln told Lamon: "Even Washburne, who has always claimed Grant as his by right of discovery, has deserted him and demands his removal; and I really believe I am the only friend Grant has left. Grant advises me that he will take Vicksburg by the Fourth of July, and I believe he will do it, and he shall have the chance." Aside from this testimony by Lamon, there is no record that Washburne ever wavered in his loyalty to Grant.

After the great fortress of Vicksburg had fallen to Grant's army on July 4th, 1863, Lincoln sent the first warm message of congratulations that Grant had received from him during the more than two years of his leadership of the armies in the West:

"I do not remember that you and I ever met personally. I write this now as a grateful acknowledgment for the almost inestimable service you have done the country. I wish to say a word further. When you first reached the vicinity of Vicksburg, I thought you should do what you finally did—march the troops across the neck, run the batteries with the transports, and thus go below; and I never had any faith, except a general hope that you knew better than I, that the Yazoo Pass expedition and the like could succeed. When you got below and took Port Gibson, Grand Gulf, and vicinity, I thought you should go down the river and join General Banks, and when you turned northward, east of the Big Black, I feared it was a mistake. I now wish to make the personal acknowledgment that you were right and I was wrong."

It was not often that either Grant or Lincoln offered

the other advice. Perhaps the most striking exception to this general rule is to be found in a letter Grant wrote to Lincoln during the siege of Vicksburg. He had learned that the name of Napoleon Bonaparte Buford, who had served under him in the West, had been sent to the Senate for promotion to the rank of major-general. This Buford was an older half brother of the splendid soldier, Major-General John Buford, who commanded the cavalry in the advance of Meade's army and brought on the engagement on the first day at Gettysburg. Grant evidently considered the first Buford's Christian name of Napoleon Bonaparte a misnomer, for in terms of the strongest opposition to his elevation he wrote Lincoln, "He would hardly make a respectable hospital nurse if put in petticoats." In Buford's stead, Grant recommended General John A. Logan, saying: "He has proven himself a most valuable officer. There is not a more patriotic soldier, braver man, or one more deserving of promotion in this department than General Logan."<sup>1</sup>

After the fall of Vicksburg Grant wanted to make an undoubtedly wise and timely movement against Mobile. Lincoln preferred sending an expedition into Texas to establish the national authority there and also, as Grant said, "to stop the clamor of some of the foreign governments which seemed to be seeking a pretext to interfere in the war." In his letter to Grant at this time, Lincoln stated: "I see by a dispatch of yours that you incline quite strongly toward an expedition against Mobile. This would appear tempting to me also, were it not that in view of recent events in Mexico I am greatly impressed with the importance of reestablishing the national authority in Western Texas as soon as possible. I am not making an order, however, that I leave for the present at least, to the General-in-Chief." At the end of this letter Lincoln asked, referring to his note of congratulation after the fall of Vicksburg, "Did you receive a short letter from me dated

---

<sup>1</sup> Robert Todd Lincoln papers.

the thirteenth of July?" This reveals that Grant was maintaining his reputation as a poor correspondent. As a result of Lincoln's preference and intervention, Grant relinquished his plan of moving against Mobile, and his army was scattered after its great victory.

The bill restoring the grade of Lieutenant-General of the Army passed through Congress and became law on February 26th, 1864. Before acting on the authority given him by Congress to appoint Grant as lieutenant-general and commander of all the armies, Lincoln naturally had some thoughts about Grant's political associations and ambitions. He consulted Elihu Washburne, through whose friendship and influence the bill had been introduced in Congress, and said to him: "I have never seen Grant. Before I appoint him to the command of the armies, I want to learn all about him. Who of his friends know him best?" Washburne suggested Russell Jones, United States Marshal of Illinois, and an acquaintance of Lincoln. When Jones, in answer to a summons, appeared at the White House, Lincoln asked many questions about Grant. In the course of the conversation Jones said to Lincoln, "Mr. President, perhaps you would like to know whether Grant is going to be a candidate for the Presidency."

Lincoln answered, "I confess I have a little curiosity on that point."

Thereupon Jones said: "Well, I have just received a reply from him to my questions on the subject. It is a private letter, but I see no impropriety in showing it to you, and it will be more satisfactory than anything I could tell you."

In the letter Grant said that nothing was further from his wishes than the Presidency, and that even had he been ambitious for it, he would not then permit his name to be used against Lincoln, whom he preferred above all men and under all circumstances. Much gratified, Lincoln said: "I wanted to know; for when this presidential grub once gets to gnawing at a man, nobody can tell how far in it has got. It is generally a good deal deeper than he himself supposes."

Grant arrived in Washington on March 8th. About 9:30 that evening he went to the White House to attend a Presidential reception. Lincoln recognized Grant immediately, from his pictures. His sad face lighted up with pleasure as he stepped forward and exclaimed: "Why, here is General Grant! Well, this is a great pleasure, I assure you." This was the first meeting between two men whose names were destined to stand out above all others in the struggle to preserve the Union. Lincoln was almost a foot taller than Grant. That night he was in evening dress and "wore a turn-down collar a size too large. The necktie was rather broad and awkwardly tied." As the President looked down with beaming face at his visitor, Grant held the lapel of his coat, his head slightly bent forward, and his eyes upturned toward Lincoln's face.

Gideon Welles, Secretary of the Navy, who was present that night, has preserved in his *Diary* this impression of Grant:

"I was near the center of the reception room when a stir and buzz attracted attention, and it was whispered that General Grant had arrived. The room was not full, the crowd having passed through to the East Room. I saw some men in uniform standing at the entrance, and one of them, a short, brown, dark-haired man, was talking with the President. There was hesitation, a degree of awkwardness in the General, and embarrassment in that part of the room, and a check or suspension of the moving column. Soon word was passed around for 'Mr. Seward! General Grant is here,' and Seward, who was just behind me, hurried and took the General by the hand and led him to Mrs. Lincoln, near whom I was standing. The crowd gathered round the circle rapidly, and it being intimated that it be necessary the throng should pass on, Seward took the General's arm and went with him to the East Room. There was clapping of hands in the next room as he passed through, and all in the East Room joined in it as he entered. A cheer or two followed, all of which seemed rowdy and unseemly."

As the word spread through the crowd at the reception, there was great excitement and shouts of "Grant! Grant!"

Grant!" arose. At the suggestion of Seward, who thought a look at the general would satisfy the crowd, Grant took a stand upon a sofa. The crowd, however, immediately pressed forward to shake his hand, and it was an hour before he could escape to one of the small drawing rooms, where he had an interview with Lincoln.

In this, their first private interview, Lincoln told Grant that he did not pretend to know anything about the handling of troops, and that it was only with the greatest reluctance that he had ever interfered with the movements of army commanders. He added, however, that he had sense enough to know that quickness of action was necessary; that with the government spending millions of dollars every day, there was a limit to the resources of the people; and that the time might come when their spirit would be exhausted. The President stated that, when he had issued executive orders to the commanders of the armies, he had borne this in mind; that he believed Grant knew the value of time, and that he did not intend to interfere with his operations. Lincoln disclaimed any desire to know Grant's plans on the ground that everybody he met was trying to learn something about the contemplated movements of the armies.

The next day, March 9th, Lincoln formally presented Grant with his commission as lieutenant-general. At their meeting the night before he had given him a copy of the remarks he intended to make; Lincoln knew of Grant's disinclination to speak in public, and thought that thus he could prepare a few lines in reply. He suggested also that if Grant, in his speech of acceptance, would say something to obviate the jealousy of other generals in the army, it would have a happy effect. The President expressed the hope that he would in addition make some reference which would put him on as good terms as possible with the Army of the Potomac.

As he handed the commission to General Grant, Lincoln spoke as follows:

"General Grant, the nation's appreciation of what you have done, and its reliance upon you for what remains

to do in the existing great struggle are now presented with this commission constituting you Lieutenant-General in the Army of the United States. With this high honor devolves upon you also a corresponding responsibility. As the country herein trusts you, so under God it will sustain you. I scarcely need to add that with what I here speak for the nation goes my own hearty, personal concurrence."

With his usual diffidence and embarrassment, Grant took out a sheet of note paper and read his penciled words; although he found it very difficult to read his own writing, what he said was good and timely:

"Mr. President, I accept this commission with gratitude for the high honor conferred. With the aid of the noble armies that have fought on so many fields for our common country, it will be my earnest endeavor not to disappoint your expectations. I feel the full weight of the responsibilities now devolving on me; and I know that if they are met, it will be due to those armies, and above all, to the favor of that Providence which leads both nations and men."

It will be noted that Grant in his response did not follow the President's suggestion that he say something in particular about the Army of the Potomac or about other high generals in the service of the country. When Lincoln made that request, he said to Grant, "If you see any objection to doing this, be under no restraint whatever in expressing that objection to the Secretary of War." It is not known whether Grant talked with Stanton about the President's suggestion, and whether Stanton advised him to say nothing on the subject. It is more probable, however, that he omitted all such reference on his own judgment.

After the ceremony of delivering the commission had been completed, Grant asked Lincoln what special service was expected of him. Lincoln answered that the country wanted him to take Richmond; that the generals who had preceded him had not been fortunate in their efforts to do so; and that he wanted to know if Grant could do it. Grant at once replied that he could take the city if he had the troops; Lincoln promised him all the troops he needed.

There was nothing said about the plan of campaign, whether Grant was to follow the overland route against Richmond, or take his army to the Peninsula as McClellan had done.

Both Stanton and Halleck, now reduced to chief of staff, had impertinently warned Grant not to divulge his plans to Lincoln, telling him the President was so kind-hearted that someone would be sure to get the information from him. Grant told Lincoln nothing; neither did he communicate his plans to the Secretary of War or to Halleck. This was most amazing. Although a great campaign was about to open, neither Lincoln, Halleck, the chief of staff, nor the Secretary of War knew, nor would know, the plan until the campaign started. A modern general, embarking on operations of equal magnitude, would hardly dare to leave his superiors in such darkness.

At their first private interview, Lincoln informed Grant that he did not wish to know his plans, but wanted him to consider a scheme which he had in mind, to be used or rejected as he saw fit. He then laid out before Grant on the table a map of Virginia on which were marked the positions occupied by the Federal and Confederate armies. Pointing out on the map two streams which flowed into the Potomac, Lincoln proposed that the army might be moved on boats and landed between the mouths of the two streams. If such a plan were followed, he thought supplies could be brought down the Potomac and that the two streams would protect the flanks of the Union Army as it advanced. Grant listened respectfully, but did not suggest "that the same streams would protect Lee's flanks while he was shutting us up."

Francis Harrison Pierpont, Union war governor of the "restored" state of Virginia, relates that at an interview with Lincoln at the White House after the fall of Richmond and the surrender of Lee's army, he congratulated the President on his achievements as commander-in-chief of the army. Lincoln's reply was abrupt:

"I want you to stop those congratulations right here. I



want it distinctly understood that I claim no part nor lot in the honor of the military achievements in front of Richmond. All the honor belongs to the military. After I went to the front I made two or three suggestions to General Grant about military movements, and he knocked the sand from under me so quickly that I concluded I knew nothing about it and offered no more advice."

At one of their first interviews, Lincoln referred to Grant's predecessors who kept calling for supplies and reinforcements, yet won no victory, and related the fable of Jocko to Grant:

"There was a great civil war among the animals. One side had difficulty in securing a commander who had confidence in his abilities. At length they found a monkey by the name of Jocko who said he thought he could command their army if his tail could be made a little longer. More tail was then secured, and spliced upon Jocko's caudal appendage. The monkey was greatly pleased with this addition, but thought that he ought to have a little more still. Another length of tail was secured and spliced on to what he had. This was repeated many times, until Jocko's tail was coiled around the room, filling all the space. Still he kept calling for more tail, and it was now necessary to wrap the lengthened tail about his shoulders. As he kept calling for more, they had to wind the additional tail about his body, and at length the weight of it broke him down, and he was unable to stand."<sup>1</sup>

Not waiting for Lincoln to draw the point of the fable, Grant rose from his chair and said, "Mr. President, I will not call for more assistance until I find it impossible to do with what I already have."

On his last day in Washington before the campaign opened in Virginia in May of 1864, Grant called on Lincoln at the White House. He thanked the President for having met all his wishes, and stated that if the campaign should prove unsuccessful, its failure could not be charged to any

---

<sup>1</sup> This anecdote, quoted from Rice's *Reminiscences*, Grant retained for the first draft of his *Memoirs*, but never used. Lincoln adapted it from Petroleum V. Nasby's caricature of McClellan.

neglect on the Chief Executive's part. In reply Lincoln said that he realized that the campaign about to open was one of great importance and expressed the hope it would prove decisive. "I can only act," he said, "through others, with some of whom it is charged I have not much influence. It pleases me to know that in this instance my directions appear to have been carried out." Lincoln then remarked that in previous campaigns a large amount of river transportation had been provided so that, in the event of defeat, the army could be quickly transferred to the north bank of the Potomac. He wanted to know if Grant had provided a sufficient number of vessels for this purpose.

"I think so," replied Grant. "We have a good many vessels—more I think than will be needed if the army is compelled to cross the river. I do not intend any reflection on the past, either upon the army or its generals, but I have an impression that the Army of the Potomac has never been fought up to its capacity—until its military effectiveness was exhausted. This time it will be; and if it is defeated, its numbers will be so reduced that it will not need a large amount of transportation." When Lincoln learned that the Army of the Potomac would be forced to the limit, he congratulated Grant upon the firmness of his purpose, and said it made him hope for such great victories in the East as Grant had gained in the West.

Grant then went on to give Lincoln a true and remarkable forecast of the coming battles in Virginia. He told the President that the country should be cautioned against expecting overwhelming successes; that opposing armies had had the same experience in war and were composed of men of the same race; and that neither army could claim any great advantage over the other in endurance, courage, or discipline. "One may be more skillfully handled than the other; accidents have sometimes won victories and caused defeats. But where two such armies meet on common ground, about equal in numbers, and equally well handled, I do not know why any better results should be expected from one than the other . . . While I hope and expect to defeat them,

I do not know why this war should not end, as wars generally do, by the exhaustion of the strength and resources of the weaker party."

Grant's forecast was both wise and true. It gave Lincoln advance notice that he should not expect the same disappointment he had suffered after the battles of Gettysburg and Antietam. Both of those engagements were fought north of the Potomac, one in Pennsylvania, and one in Maryland; in both battles such damage was inflicted upon Lee's army that the President was bitterly disappointed when Lee was permitted to escape across the Potomac into Virginia. The Confederate army was, indeed, in great peril on both occasions; some of Grant's qualities, added to the undoubtedly great abilities of McClellan and Meade when they commanded at Antietam and Gettysburg, would probably have resulted in the complete destruction of Lee's army after those battles. Grant pointed out that in the Virginia campaign their positions would be reversed: that he would be the invader upon strange ground, and that Lee would be on the defensive in his own territory. Lincoln must have remembered this conversation when the tidings of the bloody battles in Virginia, telling of Grant's inexorable advance, also revealed that the army of Lee had not been destroyed, but survived to fight another battle.

On the last day of April Lincoln sent a final message to Grant. In this letter he expressed satisfaction with all that Grant had done thus far:

"The particularities of your plan I neither know, nor seek to know. You are vigilant and self-reliant; and pleased with this I wish not to obtrude any constraints or restraints upon you. While I am very anxious that any great disaster or capture of our men in great numbers shall be avoided, I know these points are less likely to escape your attention than they would be mine. If there is anything wanting which is within my power to give, do not fail to let me know it. And now with a brave army and a just cause, may God sustain you."

In his reply to the President, Grant wrote with a warmth of feeling unusual for him:

“Your very kind letter of yesterday is just received. The confidence you express for the future, and satisfaction with the past in my military administration, is acknowledged with pride. It will be my earnest endeavor that you and the country shall not be disappointed . . . Should my success be less than I desire and expect, the least I can say is, the fault is not with you.”

On a warm May morning Grant sat on his big bay horse Cincinnati at the top of the hill where the road from Culpepper pitches down to the river and watched the regiments, divisions, and corps of the Army of the Potomac as they crossed the Rapidan and disappeared into the forests of the Wilderness. Although Grant was not a man of sentiment or imagination, he must have been thinking of those other generals before him who had led the Army of the Potomac across that same river only to return again: Burnside, Hooker, and Meade. And at the White House Lincoln, receiving the reports from the War Office on the passage of Grant's army across the Potomac, must likewise have reflected on those other campaigns which had started with great hope and promise only to bring him and the nation such keen sorrow and disappointment. Would history repeat itself? Or would this taciturn, reserved, undistinguished looking general-in-chief, of whom he had asked no information and to whom he had given no advice, bring the victory and the peace for which the nation had so long hoped and fought and prayed?

With hope and prayer and with sorrow over the sanguinary losses, Lincoln followed the bloody battles of the campaign which commenced that May day when Grant crossed the Rapidan and which came to a temporary end in the bloody repulse at Cold Harbor on June 4th. John W. Forney, a Philadelphia journalist visiting the White House, heard Lincoln cry out after one of the battles in the Wilderness: “My God! My God! Over twenty thousand men killed and wounded in a few days' fighting! I cannot

bear it! I cannot bear it!" F. B. Carpenter, who spent six months at the White House painting the picture of Lincoln reading the first draft of the Emancipation Proclamation to his cabinet which now hangs in the Capitol at Washington, said of Lincoln during these first weeks of Grant's Virginia campaign:

"In repose it was the saddest face I ever knew. There were days I could scarcely look into it without crying. The first week of the battles of the Wilderness he scarcely slept at all . . . One of these days I met him clad in a long morning wrapper, pacing back and forth a narrow passage leading to one of the windows, his hands behind him, great black rings under his eyes, his head bent forward on his breast."

While Lincoln was kneeling in his Gethsemane during those fateful days, Grant could be seen sitting near his Wilderness headquarters, his back against a tree, interminably whittling and smoking. He listened unperturbed to the staff officers who came galloping up with tidings of success or defeat, but always gave the same order, "By the left flank, forward!"

Grant's first long and costly campaign in Virginia which ended with his defeat at Second Cold Harbor on June 4th naturally raised questions in many minds as to his management of the army and the ultimate success of his campaign. "Grant, the Butcher" was the cry heard in many places in the North; the army itself began to doubt his leadership and skill. Oliver Wendell Holmes, son of the poet, later associate justice of the Supreme Court, and an officer on the Sixth Corps staff, reflected that sentiment in a letter to his parents written June 24th, three weeks after Cold Harbor: "I think the Army feels better than it might. But there's no use in disguising that the feeling for McClellan has grown in the campaign . . . I hope for success strongly before the end of the summer, but at what a cost . . . And by and by the sickness will begin . . . I hope to pull through, but don't know yet . . ." As for Lincoln himself, there is nowhere any intimation that his loyalty to his

silent general ever wavered or that he doubted that Grant would eventually take Richmond. He had noted that, as the two armies struggled desperately with one another in the tangles of the Wilderness, at the end of every battle Grant gave his army another order to advance. He remembered also that Grant had warned him not to expect a crushing, overwhelming victory in any single battle.

On only one occasion did Lincoln consider interfering in Grant's management of the army; this was during the anxious and critical weeks when Lee detached General Jubal Early from his army facing Grant before Petersburg and sent him into the Valley of Virginia. Lee ordered Early to drive off General David Hunter's army which was threatening Lynchburg, or alternately to move down the valley, cross the Potomac and threaten Washington, if it seemed he could meet with success. He was to endeavor also to release the seventeen thousand Confederate prisoners held at Point Lookout, Maryland, and add them to his army.

Unknown to the federal authorities, Early marched westward into the Valley of Virginia, drove Hunter away from Lynchburg, and then turned northward and headed for the Potomac River and Washington. Hunter retreated to Charleston, West Virginia; it was only by a long and circuitous route down the Kanawha River to the Ohio, up the Ohio by steamboat to Parkersburg, and thence by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad to Cumberland, Maryland that he was able to return his army to the scene of action. By that time, Washington had been gravely threatened. Early crossed the Potomac River above Harper's Ferry; taking the familiar route of past Confederate invasions by way of Hagerstown and Frederick, on July 9th at the Monocacy River he met and defeated the inferior federal army which General Lew Wallace had brought up from Baltimore.

At noon on the 11th of July, the advance guard of Early's army was on the outskirts of Washington. From horseback Early could see the dome of the Capitol, for he was only seven miles from the White House; before evening

he hoped to see the Stars and Bars floating over the nation's Capitol. As he was examining the defenses of Fort Stevens, he saw a cloud of dust rising some distance away, and presently he could discern troops moving in on the left and on the right of the fort. These were the veterans of Wright's Sixth Corps, sent north by Grant to save the city. Early then realized that his chance of capturing Washington without great loss had evaporated, and that he could not hold the capital even if he took it. Much disappointed, he gave the order for the retreat the next morning. On that 12th of July, when Early's troops were still threatening Washington, Lincoln stood on one of the parapets of Fort Stevens watching the progress of a skirmish until General Wright peremptorily requested him to withdraw after an officer fell mortally wounded only a few feet from him.

It was during the days when Early was approaching Washington that Lincoln suggested to Grant that he leave before Petersburg only sufficient forces to hold Lee, and come north himself with his army to save the capital and destroy Early. Grant had telegraphed to Halleck this message:

"Forces enough to defeat all that Early has with him should get in his rear, south of him, and follow him up sharply, leaving him to go north; defending depots, towns, etc., with small garrisons and the militia. If the President thinks it advisable that I should go to Washington in person, I can start in an hour after receiving notice, leaving everything here on the defensive."

Lincoln acted on this suggestion promptly by replying:

"Your dispatch to General Halleck referring to what I may think in the present emergency is shown me . . . What I think is that you should provide to retain your hold where you are, certainly; and bring the rest with you, personally, and make a vigorous effort to defeat the enemy's force in this vicinity. I think there is really a fair chance to do this if the movement is prompt. This is what I think—upon your suggestion, and is not an order."

To this Grant replied: "I think on reflection it would

have a bad effect for me to leave here; and with Ord at Baltimore and Hunter and Wright with the forces following the enemy up, could do no good. I have great faith that the enemy will never get back with much of his force." To this Lincoln answered: "Yours of 10:30 P.M. yesterday, received and very satisfactory."

Grant's confidence that Early would never be able to return from his raid on Washington with his army intact was not justified; not only did he retire safely to the Valley of Virginia, but he continued to threaten Washington and Pennsylvania until Grant detached Sheridan from his command of the cavalry with the Army of the Potomac and sent him into the Valley of Virginia to dispose of the Confederate forces. Sheridan accomplished his mission in the battles of Winchester and Cedar Creek in September of 1864.

When Early was still threatening Washington, Grant put Sheridan in command in the Valley of Virginia, with orders to "put himself south of the enemy and follow him to the death. Wherever the enemy goes, let our troops go also." Lincoln saw this dispatch, transmitted through Halleck; with complete disregard for military procedure and official etiquette, he telegraphed Grant:

"I have seen your dispatch in which you say: 'I want Sheridan put in command of all the troops in the field, with instructions to put himself south of the enemy and follow him to the death. Wherever the enemy goes, let our troops go also.' This, I think, is exactly right as to how our forces should move. But please look over the dispatches you may have received from here, even since you made that order, and discover, if you can, that there is any idea in the head of any one here of 'putting our armies south of the enemy' or of 'following him to the death' in any direction. I repeat to you, it will neither be done nor attempted unless you watch it every day and hour and force it."

Two hours after he received this dispatch from Lincoln, Grant departed to join General Hunter's army at Monocacy Station.



Grant believed that, had Early arrived at Washington one day sooner, he would have taken the capital, and that he would have arrived sooner but for General Lew Wallace's gallant stand at the Monocacy River. Although Early could not have held Washington long, its capture would have been a great blow to the prestige of the federal government and would have had unfortunate repercussions among the governments of Europe. Had Early taken the city, Lincoln would probably have suffered defeat in the subsequent election, and Grant would have been removed from his commanding post.

This raid against Washington forms the least creditable chapter in Grant's management of the army. In the first place, it exposed a very faulty information service. When Early's presence in the Valley of Virginia was rumored, Washington sent inquiries to Grant's headquarters at City Point, and received the answer that Early was still with Lee defending Petersburg. It was not until the 5th of July that Grant and Meade were convinced that Early had left Lee's army; by that time he had been gone three weeks. Such success as the raid achieved revealed a distressing looseness of military organization. Although Grant's promotion was designed to eliminate divided authority, the greatest confusion reigned when the Confederate raiders approached the city. Charles A. Dana, who had been at Grant's headquarters at City Point and was sent north to keep Grant informed of the situation, thus describes the disorganization and divided counsels: "There was no head to the whole. General Halleck would not give orders except as he received them from Grant. The President would give none; and until Grant directed positively and explicitly what was to be done, everything was practically at a standstill." Neither Halleck nor Lincoln can be blamed for the critical situation which arose. Grant must bear the chief responsibility for the approach of an army of almost twenty thousand men to the gates of the capital without definite advance warning, and for the fact that Washington was saved only by a day, as he himself confessed. Lincoln must

be praised for not breaking up Grant's army to defend Washington as in 1862 he had divided McClellan's army for the same reason, when he withheld from McClellan the powerful corps under General McDowell. He did, indeed, make an unwise suggestion in asking Grant to come north with his army and defend the city. Nothing would have pleased Lee better than thus to have the scene of hostilities transferred from the vicinity of Richmond to Maryland and Washington.

As the time for the meeting of the national conventions and the nomination of presidential candidates drew nigh, Lincoln had no reason to fear that Grant might take the field against him as the nominee of either party. Early in 1864, *The New York Herald*, edited by James Gordon Bennett, began to boom Grant as the "People's Candidate" for the Presidency. Joseph Medill, editor of *The Chicago Tribune*, which had played so great a part in securing for Lincoln his first nomination, editorially told "the organ of the Five Points and the thugs of New York" to "keep its copperhead slime off our Illinois general . . . Grant is an old neighbor and friend of President Lincoln.<sup>1</sup> The latter has stood by him with the strength of iron from the first . . . In return, General Grant has been true as steel to his friend and Commander-in-Chief. For *The New York Herald* to bring out General Grant is a gross libel on him and an insult to his friend . . . It cannot be allowed to paw and slobber over our Illinois General."

When the Third Party, or Radical, Convention at Cleveland nominated John C. Frémont for the Presidency, one faction of the convention wished to designate Grant, but this effort was defeated by those who looked upon him as "one of Lincoln's hirelings." On June 4th, three days before the meeting of the Republican Convention at Baltimore, a number of prominent men called a mass meeting in Union Square with the avowed purpose of honoring Grant and

---

<sup>1</sup> Grant was neither an old neighbor nor friend of Lincoln, as Medill wrote in his editorial. At that time Lincoln had never seen him. As a "neighbor" Grant had never been nearer to Lincoln than St. Louis or Galena.

expressing to him the gratitude of the country for his eminent services. It was, however, the undoubted purpose of the meeting to push Grant's candidacy, even at the eleventh hour. Those in charge invited Lincoln to participate. He did not accept the invitation, but wrote an adroit letter, saying that he approved "whatever may tend to strengthen and sustain General Grant and the noble armies now under his command . . . I trust that at your meeting you will so shape your good words that they may turn to men and guns, moving to his and their support."

When some of Lincoln's friends warned him to beware of Grant as a possible rival for the presidency, he was wont to answer, "If he takes Richmond, let him have it!" One day a man informed Lincoln that he could be cheated of re-election only by Grant's capture of Richmond followed by a Democrat's nomination. To this Lincoln replied: "Well, I feel very much like the man who said he didn't want to die particularly, but if he had got to die, that was precisely the disease he would like to die of."

In the early Fall, when the anxiety and gloom which had prevailed through the Summer had given away to confidence in his re-election, Lincoln made overtures through Francis P. Blair, Sr. to General McClellan to withdraw from the contest, now that his defeat was certain, and thus unite the country and bring about a speedy termination of the bloody war. "I think," said Lincoln to Blair, "he is man enough and patriot to do it. Do you? You have been his friend and mine. Will you try this last appeal to General McClellan's patriotism?" If he agreed to the proposition, McClellan was to be elevated to the post of General of the Army, a rank not held since Washington was honored with it, and McClellan's father-in-law and former chief of staff, General Randolph B. Marcy, was to be made a major-general in the Regular Army. When this proposal was submitted to McClellan, he consulted prominent Democrats in New York, and on their advice declined to accept it.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Lamon, *Recollections of Lincoln*, pp. 207, 208. It may seem extraordinary to us today that Lincoln should have purposed to give McClellan, whom

Although the October elections of 1864 in Pennsylvania had gone against the Republican Party, there was no question of Lincoln's victory in the national election in November. If Pennsylvania and New York went Democratic, however, the prestige of his administration would be greatly weakened. A vigorous campaign was being waged in Pennsylvania for its "native son," McClellan. Anxious about Pennsylvania, Colonel Alexander McClure held a night conference with Lincoln at the White House. When the subject of the election was introduced, Lincoln said to McClure, "Well, what's to be done?" McClure then suggested that, inasmuch as Grant's army was inactive before Petersburg and Sheridan's beyond Winchester, five thousand Pennsylvania soldiers be furloughed from each army and sent home to vote.

Lincoln's face brightened at the thought. Then McClure added: "Of course you can trust Grant to make the suggestion to him to furlough five thousand Pennsylvania troops for two weeks?" To McClure's surprise a shadow fell over Lincoln's face and he was silent. At this McClure exclaimed, "Surely, Mr. President, you can trust Grant with a confidential suggestion to furlough Pennsylvania troops?" Lincoln remained silent, evidently distressed. McClure then reminded Lincoln that at another midnight meeting held at the White House after the battle of Shiloh, he had in that very room pleaded with Lincoln to dismiss Grant from his army for the good of the cause. "It can't be possible,"

he had dismissed a year before after the great victory of Antietam, a rank higher than Grant, and thus kindle anew fierce controversies. If McClellan had withdrawn from the contest, and Lincoln had been re-elected without any opposition to unite the country, Lincoln, always sensitive to political considerations, well knew that he could then give McClellan any honor he desired. Is it possible that Lamon, writing thirty-one years after the 1864 election, confused this alleged proposal to McClellan with the one which Lincoln made to him through Francis Blair, Sr., before the Democratic Convention met, asking him to decline the nomination, and speak at a union meeting in New York, assuring him that he would be restored to a high military command? See Appleton, *American Annual Cyclopaedia, 1864*, p. 790; also Macartney, *Little Mac*, pp. 329, 330.

he said, "that Grant is not your friend; he can't be such an ingrate!" After a moment's hesitation Lincoln replied, "Well, McClure, I have no reason to believe that Grant prefers my election to that of McClellan."

When he had recovered from his anger and astonishment, McClure observed that Meade was a soldier and a gentleman, and that an order to him would be sufficient. To this Lincoln answered, "I reckon that can be done." McClure then asked, "What about Sheridan?" At that the sad face of the President lightened up and he exclaimed, "Oh, Phil Sheridan; he is all right!" The troops were sent home and swelled the Republican majority in Pennsylvania to 14,364.

Toward the close of Grant's second term as President, McClure met him at Drexel's Bank in Philadelphia and inquired as to his feeling towards Lincoln and McClellan in the election of 1864. Grant told him that it would have been obviously unbecoming on his part to have made a public statement against an officer whom he had succeeded as general-in-chief. However one may justify this viewpoint, the fact remains that Lincoln's heart was burdened by the thought that the general-in-chief for whom he had done so much cared little whether he emerged victorious in the contest with McClellan. The election of 1864 afforded Grant an opportunity to show gratitude of which he did not avail himself. Even the most scrupulous will be inclined to think that Grant could have taken more interest in Lincoln's re-election without in any way compromising his position as commander of the army, especially since McClellan had been nominated by a convention which had declared the war a "failure."

The famous Hampton Roads peace conference on *The River Queen*, held on February 3rd, 1865 between President Lincoln and Secretary of State Seward for the United States, and Alexander Stephens, R. M. Hunter, and Judge John A. Campbell for the Confederate Government, would not have taken place but for Grant's intervention and his great desire for peace. Lincoln had outlined three condi-

tions as indispensable to peace: restoration of the national authority throughout all states; no compromise of the slavery question; and no cessation of hostilities short of surrender. When the Confederate commissioners who had arrived at Grant's headquarters at City Point were notified that they could not proceed further unless they complied strictly with Lincoln's terms, it seemed that the conference would not be held. Grant had been impressed with the Confederate commissioners' earnestness, however; on the night of February 1st, when it seemed that the mission was at an end, he telegraphed Secretary of War Stanton that he was convinced that they had good intentions and a sincere desire to restore peace and union. "I fear now," he said, "their going back without any expression from anyone in authority will have a bad influence . . . I am sorry, however, that Mr. Lincoln cannot have an interview with the two named in this dispatch [Stephens and Hunter], if not all three now within our lines."

On the morning of February 2nd, Lincoln went to the War Department and was about to recall Seward by telegraph when Grant's dispatch to Stanton was handed him. He immediately telegraphed Grant: "Say to the gentlemen I will meet them personally at Fortress Monroe as soon as I get there." By this time, the commissioners had changed their mind and agreed to accept Lincoln's terms for the conference; they were conveyed from Grant's headquarters at City Point to Fortress Monroe. On the next day, February 3rd, the memorable but fruitless conference was held on *The River Queen*.

After the failure of the Hampton Roads conference, the Confederate authorities made another attempt to negotiate peace, this time between the commanders of the Union and Confederate armies; Lee had been recently elevated to supreme command by the Confederate Congress. The correspondence between Grant and Lee concerning a peace conference was the result of a meeting between General E. O. C. Ord of Grant's army and General Longstreet of Lee's army.

On February 20th, 1865, General Ord, commanding the Army of the James, sent a note to General Longstreet, saying that he would be pleased to meet him to make an arrangement to put an end to the irregular bartering between the Federal and Confederate troops on the picket lines. Since Longstreet knew that Ord could stop this bartering on the part of the Union soldiers by his own order, he concluded that he had something else on his mind when he requested the meeting. When they met the next day, Longstreet suggested a simple manner of correcting this irregular practice. Then Ord turned to the real purpose of his interview. Referring to the failure of the Hampton Roads conference for peace, he said the politicians of the North were "afraid to touch the question of peace, and that there was no way to open the subject except through officers of the armies." He suggested that the leaders of the two armies meet "as former comrades and friends and talk a little." An armistice was to be declared; General Grant and General Lee were to meet and have a talk. Ord suggested, too, that feminine influence be employed, and that Longstreet's wife, a girlhood friend of Mrs. Grant, should be escorted by Confederate officers through the Union lines to visit Mrs. Grant. Mrs. Grant would then return the call and visit Richmond under the protection of Union officers.

In answer to this proposal, Longstreet told Ord that he was not authorized to speak on the subject, but would convey his suggestion to Lee and the Confederate authorities. In accordance with this promise Longstreet met with President Davis, Secretary of War Breckinridge, and General Lee at the President's mansion in Richmond. After hearing Longstreet's report, the conferees agreed that a favorable answer should be delivered as soon as another meeting could be arranged with General Ord. Breckinridge, in particular, was enthusiastic about the part which the ladies were to play. When the meeting broke up, Longstreet suggested to Lee that he write to Grant requesting an interview on some pretext; when they met, he could suggest the real purpose of the conference.

The next day Longstreet reported to General Ord the result of his meeting with Davis and Lee. Ord then asked that Lee write to Grant requesting an interview, saying that Grant was prepared to receive the letter, and that he "thought that a way could be found for a military convention, while old friends of the military service could get together and seek out ways to stop the flow of blood." On March 2nd Lee sent a letter to Grant through Longstreet. The letter was left open with instructions to read, seal, and forward it. In his letter Lee stated that Longstreet had informed him that he was not averse to "arriving at a satisfactory adjustment of the present unhappy difficulties by means of a military convention." If Grant was still favorable to such a conference, Lee suggested that they meet on the following Monday at 11 o'clock at a place to be selected by Generals Ord and Longstreet.

When Longstreet read this letter, he returned to Richmond and again asked Lee to state some other business as the occasion for the interview. Lee was not disposed to handle the matter by indirection or evasion, however, and ordered the letter to be delivered as written. In the negotiations thus far, Lee and the Confederate authorities apparently acted under the mistaken assumption that Grant held a relation to the United States Government similar to that enjoyed by Lee, who had recently been made a virtual dictator by the Confederate Congress and who doubtless could have compelled his government to accept any measure he deemed necessary for the restoration of peace.

After receiving Lee's letter, Grant telegraphed its contents to Stanton. Lincoln was at the Capitol signing bills on the night before his second inauguration when Stanton handed him Grant's telegram. After reading it in silence, Lincoln took up a pen and slowly wrote out a dispatch in Stanton's name. He first showed the dispatch to Seward, and then gave it to Stanton to be signed and sent. In this dispatch Lincoln said:

"The President directs me to say that he wishes you to have no conference with General Lee unless it be for the



capitulation of General Lee's army; or on some minor or purely military matter. He instructs me to say that you are not to decide, discuss, or confer upon any political questions. Such questions the President holds in his own hands and will submit them to no military conferences or conventions. Meanwhile you are to press to the utmost your military advantages."<sup>1</sup>

The next day Grant replied to Lee as follows:

"In regard to meeting you on the 6th instant, I would state that I have no authority to accede to your proposition for a conference on the subject proposed. Such authority is vested in the President of the United States alone. General Ord could only have meant that I would not refuse an interview on any subject on which I have a right to act, which, of course, would be such as are purely of a military character, and on the subject of exchanges, which has been entrusted to me."<sup>2</sup>

It is clear, of course, that, in his interview with Longstreet, General Ord *did* go beyond implying that Grant was willing to discuss such matters as the exchange of prisoners. There is no doubt that he had received the impression from conversations with Grant that the Union chief felt that a military convention might succeed in establishing peace where the politicians had failed. Thus Lincoln's plain and somewhat severe telegram to Grant, followed by Grant's message to Lee, informed the Confederate authorities that it was a case of fighting to the bitter end or accepting Lincoln's terms. Thus was the pathway cleared for the drama of Appomattox.

In one of the volumes of *The Official Records of the War of the Rebellion* there appears a list of prominent persons who named recruits to represent them as substitutes in the army, and of the recruits who were selected. Reading down this list we find the following interesting entry: "District of Columbia; Principal, Abraham Lincoln. Name of Recruit, John S. Staples." In order that he might share more

<sup>1</sup> Badeau, *Military History of U. S. Grant*, Vol. III, pp. 401-2; Nicolay and Hay, *Abraham Lincoln*, Vol. X, p. 158.

<sup>2</sup> Longstreet, *Manassas to Appomattox*, p. 587.

directly in the sorrows and dangers and triumphs of the army, Lincoln requested the draft officers for his ward, the third of Washington, to procure a substitute to represent him in the army. John S. Staples, to whom Lincoln gave sixty dollars, was the substitute chosen and was enrolled in Company H of the Second District of Columbia Regiment, of which his father was chaplain. The young substitute rendered faithful and gallant service. His grave can be seen in the cemetery at Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania.

In the last months of the war, Lincoln had a still closer representative and substitute at the front in the person of his oldest son. Robert Lincoln was graduated from Harvard University in 1864, and wanted to enter the army at once, but his father persuaded him to remain at Harvard and enter the Law School. Early in 1865, however, when Robert renewed his request that he be permitted to enter the army, Lincoln wrote to Grant asking him to find a place for Robert on his staff:

“Please read and answer this letter as though I was not President, but only a friend. My son, now in his twenty-second year having graduated at Harvard, wishes to see something of the war before it ends. I do not wish to put him in the ranks, nor yet to give him a commission, to which those who have already served long are better entitled, and better qualified to hold. Could he, without embarrassment to you, or detriment to the service go into your military family with some nominal rank, I, and not the public, furnishing his necessary means? If no, say so without the least hesitation, because I am as anxious and as deeply interested that you shall not be encumbered as you can be yourself.”

In response Grant said:

“I will be most happy to have him in my military family in the manner you propose. The nominal rank given him is immaterial. But I would suggest that of captain, as I have three staff officers now of considerable service in no higher grade. Indeed I have one officer with only the rank of lieutenant, who has been in the service from the beginning of the war. This, however, will make no dif-

ference, and I would still say, give the rank of captain. Please excuse my writing on a half sheet. I have no resource but to take the blank half of your letter."

Robert Lincoln thus became a member of Grant's staff, where he was treated as any other member of the staff rather than as the President's son. He was able and industrious and, as he had many of his father's social qualities, was a popular member of the staff.

"I am always grateful," General Grant said fifteen years after the war when he was returning from his trip around the world, "that Mr. Lincoln spent the last, or almost the last, days of his life, with me." Lincoln had visited Grant and the army after the battle of Cold Harbor in June of 1864; except for their meeting at the Hampton Roads conference in February of 1865, the President did not again visit headquarters until the last weeks of the war. His coming was accidental. One of Grant's staff one day inquired, "Why don't you ask the President to come down and visit you?" Grant replied that the President was commander-in-chief of the army and could come whenever he desired. It was then hinted to Grant that Lincoln's failure to visit army headquarters was due to public discussion of his interference with generals in the field. When Grant was made to realize this, he telegraphed Lincoln the following message: "Can you not visit City Point for a day or two? I would like very much to see you, and I think the rest would do you good."

Accompanied by Mrs. Lincoln, and his son Thomas, known as Tad, Lincoln arrived at City Point on March 24th. He made his headquarters on *The River Queen*, but spent most of his time on land, telling his favorite anecdotes at headquarters or riding on Grant's horse Cincinnati with the general through the lines of the army. With his high hat, his carelessly fastened tie, his frock coat, and his trousers working well up towards his knees, the President, although he was an able horseman, presented a somewhat grotesque appearance. Everywhere the soldiers greeted him with enthusiastic cheers.

Admiral Porter, who conducted Lincoln to Richmond after the fall of that city and who kept notes of the President's visit to City Point at this time, records that Lincoln was "evidently nervous; the enormous expense of the war seemed to weigh upon him like an incubus. He could not keep away from General Grant's tent, and was constantly inquiring when he was going to move . . . I saw that without being aware of it he was pushing General Grant to move more than circumstances justified; and I did all I could to withdraw his attention from the subject."

On the morning of March 29th, Grant left City Point by train for the Petersburg front to commence the operations which were to end in victory at Appomattox eleven days later. As the staff horses were being put aboard the train, Lincoln came ashore to bid Grant farewell. Even as the last act in the drama of the Civil War was about to open, he was still the storyteller and the jester. Grant had been recounting some of the impossible suggestions made as to means for destroying the enemy; the last suggestion was to the effect that the federal soldiers be armed with bayonets a foot longer than those of the Confederates. The bayonets would go clear through the enemy; theirs would not reach far enough to touch the federal soldiers, and this would terminate the war. Lincoln laughed and replied with what was probably the last of the many anecdotes which Grant heard fall from his lips. This time it was something unusual, an incident out of Lincoln's own history. One dark night, as he was walking along a street in Louisville a tough emerged from an alley and, flourishing in front of Lincoln's face a bowie knife the blade of which seemed to Lincoln to be about three feet long, said to him, "Stranger, kin you lend me five dollars on that?" "I never reached in my pocket," Lincoln said to Grant, "and got out money so fast in all my life. I handed him a bank note and said, 'There's a ten, neighbor; now put up your scythe.'"

In another moment Lincoln passed from the joker and anecdotist to the man of care, anxiety, and sorrow. He shook hands with Grant and the members of the staff as

they boarded the train. As it was about to start, Lincoln answered the salutes of Grant and the officers and, lifting his hat, said in a voice broken with emotion: "Goodbye, gentlemen. God bless you all. Remember, your success is my success."

Petersburg fell after the battle of Five Forks on April 1st; at Grant's suggestion, Lincoln visited the town briefly. This time he radiated gratitude and happiness and greeted Grant with the greatest enthusiasm. "Do you know, General," he said, "I've had a sneaking sort of idea all along that you intended to do something like this." He then stated that he supposed that Grant intended to have Sherman come up from North Carolina to co-operate with him. Grant replied that at one time he had entertained that plan, but had recently concluded that it would be better to let the Army of the Potomac deliver the final blow and finish the task. If Sherman's army, made up mostly of western troops, were present at the surrender of Lee's army, some of the politicians would claim the victory for the troops from the West. "I see, I see," said Lincoln, "but I never thought of it in that light. In fact, my anxiety had been so great that I didn't care where the help came from, so that the work was perfectly done."

After Appomattox, instead of going to Richmond, which Lincoln had visited after its fall, Grant made his way directly to Washington. There, on the fatal Friday of April 14th, he met with Lincoln and the cabinet. The conversation turned to Sherman and his army, from whom nothing had been heard for some time. Stanton, who had the latest news, had not yet arrived; Grant remarked that he was hourly expecting word from Sherman. Lincoln then said that he had no doubt that favorable word would soon come, for the night before he had had the dream which he had experienced before nearly every great and important event of the war. The dream had always been the same and the news which succeeded it had invariably been favorable. When Gideon Welles, the Secretary of the Navy, inquired as to the nature of this remarkable vision, Lincoln replied

that it related to Welles's element, the water, and that he was moving in a singular, indescribable vessel with great rapidity toward an indefinite shore. He had had this dream before Antietam, Gettysburg, Stone River, Vicksburg, and other victories. Grant then interrupted to say, perhaps because of his distaste for Rosecrans, that Stone River [Murfreesboro] was no victory, and that several such battles would have ruined the North. According to Welles, Lincoln looked curiously and inquiringly at Grant for a moment, and then added that they might differ on that point, but that at all events his dream had preceded that battle. A great event was, indeed, to follow Lincoln's dream, an event which was to shake the nation and shock the world; on that same night the pistol of John Wilkes Booth flashed in the President's box at Ford's Theatre, and the next morning, at 7:22 o'clock, Lincoln ceased to breathe.

Fifteen years later, Grant recalled his wartime association with Lincoln: "I have no doubt that Lincoln will be the conspicuous figure of the war, one of the greatest figures of history." Today none will doubt that Lincoln "belongs to the ages"; few will question Grant's verdict upon his commander-in-chief. Following Lincoln himself, Grant emerges as the second most conspicuous figure of the war. Both these men were common, everyday Americans; so much so, indeed, that either could have been born anywhere in the country. To those who saw them for the first time, Lincoln appeared very ugly and Grant most undistinguished. In the case of Lincoln, however, a touch of melancholy and sadness about the face suggested that a greatness of soul lurked behind the strange countenance. There was nothing about Grant's face or personality which in the remotest way suggested spiritual or intellectual elevation.

Lincoln, born in 1809, was thirteen years older than Grant, born in 1822. One was the son of a wandering wilderness carpenter, the other the child of a frontier Ohio tanner. Lincoln saw almost nothing of schools; Grant passed through West Point and had the advantage of the best education that the government then gave its soldiers. De-

spite this, Grant was never devoted to books or to reading and probably read very little after graduating from the military academy. Lincoln, on the other hand, was fond of the Bible and of Shakespeare, read them much, and quoted them often. He was likewise quite familiar with those strange companions for Shakespeare and the Bible: Artemus Ward and Petroleum V. Nasby.<sup>1</sup>

Lincoln exhibited a vein of melancholy, superstition, and sentiment; a more matter-of-fact man than Grant never appeared on the American scene. Both Lincoln and Grant married southern women of good social standing and slaveholding connections. Grant's married life was peaceful and happy; Lincoln's was stormy and tragic. Both revealed deep affection for their children: Lincoln liked to have Tad about him when he made his trips to City Point and elsewhere; Grant wanted his boy, Fred, on his pony at his side when he rode through the camps.

Lincoln achieved the heights both as an orator and as a writer of speeches. Grant was a halting speaker; as a writer of military dispatches, however, he was unmistakably clear and lucid. His *Memoirs*, written to lift a load of debt from his family's shoulders when the merciless hand of cancer was gripping him by the throat, must rank among the classics of military autobiography. Both men were absolutely devoid of show and pose; both were magnificent in their humility. Lincoln said he was willing to hold McClellan's horse by the bridle if only he would lead the army to victory; Grant, when he volunteered for service at the outbreak of the war, expressed doubts of his fitness for a rank higher than that of captain. Grant was reserved and reticent and, except with friends, a poor conversationalist. Lincoln was an inveterate story-teller, often wearying his listeners.

If at one time Lincoln thought that McClellan's, and even Ben Butler's, abilities exceeded those of Grant, there was never a moment when Grant's persistence, calmness, and courage failed to appeal to him. To F. B. Carpenter, the

---

<sup>1</sup> The pen name of David R. Locke, editor of *The Toledo Blade*.

painter who had asked Lincoln how Grant compared with other officers of the army and especially with those who had preceded him in command, Lincoln said: "The great thing about Grant, I take it, is his perfect correctness and persistency of purpose. I judge he is not easily excited—which is a great element in an officer—and he has the grit of a bulldog! Once let him get his teeth in, and nothing can shake him off."

When Lincoln received Grant's first dispatches during the battles in the Wilderness, he said to John Hay, his secretary: "How near we have been to this thing before and failed. I believe if any other general had been at the head of that army, it would have now been on this side of the Rapidan. It is the dogged pertinacity of Grant that wins."

Grant, by his own confession, was fortunate in attaining the chief command of the armies and taking the field against Lee in the last year of the war, when Lincoln and the nation realized that the victory must be won; that peace could be achieved only at a great price; that no perfect general would appear; and that the task must be entrusted to a single hand. Had Grant been in command of the Army of the Potomac in the previous years, he probably would have shared the fate of McClellan, Burnside, and Hooker. The attitude of Lincoln toward his last commanding general was altogether different from that which he had exhibited toward Grant's predecessors. Now there was no pathetic appeal to Grant, as in the case of Halleck, to do something to help him in the crisis; no fatherly admonition, as in the case of Burnside and Hooker; no sarcasm, as in the case of McClellan; and no complaint because of lost opportunity, as in the case of Meade after Gettysburg. Now no army corps or division was held back because Washington was thought to be in danger; no demands were made as to the plans of operation; and no executive order, requiring the army to move on such a day or in such a way, was issued. All that belonged to the past. Patiently and confidently Lincoln waited for Grant to strike the final blow.



Both Lincoln and Grant were completely devoted to the Union; neither ever doubted the ultimate victory. There was, at the last, a touching and beautiful fitness in the fact that Lincoln spent almost the last days of his life with Grant at City Point as the curtain was about to fall on the Confederacy at Appomattox. On one of these mild Spring evenings, as they were sitting about the camp fire at Grant's headquarters, Lincoln related one of his characteristic anecdotes. When the laughter which followed had subsided, Grant looked up at him and said, "Mr. President, did you at any time doubt the final success of the cause?" Lifting himself up in his camp chair, and raising his right hand by way of emphasis, Lincoln replied with the greatest earnestness, "Never, for a moment!"

Eighty-eight years have passed since Grant, seated at the marble-top table in the McLean house at Appomattox, wrote out the terms of surrender for Lee's army. Already the names of many of the leaders among the statesmen and soldiers of that day have grown dim, but those of Lincoln and Grant will be remembered as long as America shall have a name and place among the nations of the earth. Neither ever despaired of the Republic; in the final analysis, theirs was the fateful responsibility of preserving and perpetuating the Republic.



# I N D E X

- Alexander, E. P., McPherson and, 55f.; death of, 56
- Allen, Col. Robert, 157
- Anderson, Gen. Robert, 135, 269
- Andersonville, 16; Butler in command at, 172ff.
- Antietam, 8, 31, 37, 136, 137, 160, 246, 319
- Appomattox, 51, 86, 126, 132, 134, 163, 333, 336
- Arkansas Post, 224, 232f.
- Army Magazine, The*, 41
- Atlanta, 16, 66, 67; captured by Sherman, 294
- Babcock, 51, 146, 180
- Badeau, Adam, 17, 27, 51, 136, 146, 153, 157, 189, 282, 289, 298, 301, 333n.; on Grant and Sherman, 15; on Thomas, 29; on Halleck and McClellan, 156; on Chattanooga, 196; on Grant, 218, 292
- Ball's Bluff, 225, 263
- Banks, Gen. Nathaniel T., 88, 161, 171, 172, 244, 310
- Barnard, Gen., 176, 184, 204
- Barton, Gen., 127
- Bates, 160
- Beauregard, Gen. Peter, 135, 273; on Butler, 166; defeats Butler, 176
- Bee, Barnard E., 190
- Beecher, Henry Ward, 44
- Belmont, 79, 80, 99, 109, 222, 288, 306, 308; McClellan at, 226
- Ben Hur*, 60
- Bennett, James Gordon, 326
- Black River Bridge, 161
- Blaine, James G., 159, 184; on Logan, 100; Logan runs with, 108
- Blair, Gen. Francis, 99, 213, 224, 268, 301, 309, 327; as Logan's rival, 104
- Blair, Montgomery, 99
- Bloody Angle, 132
- Bonaparte, Jerome N., 112f.
- Booneville, 114
- Bowers, Col. Theodore S., 43, 78, 82, 93; advises Grant, 290
- Boynton, Gen. Edward, 300
- Boynton, Gen. H. V., 185
- Bragg, Gen. Braxton, 1, 8, 12, 15, 114, 195, 249ff., 273, 283, 286; and Thomas, 6, 7; and Rosecrans, 195f.
- Brandy Station, 33
- Brannon, 12
- Breckenridge, Col. W. C. P., 66
- Breckinridge, John C., 303
- Breckinridge, Sec., and peace overtures, 331
- Brockett, 113
- Brown's Ferry, 197f.
- Buckingham, Gen. C. P., 247
- Buell, Gen. Don Carlos, 110, 114, 135, 158, 273, 291; superseded by Thomas, 7; Smith on, 221; tragic career of, 224; succeeds Sherman, 270; at Shiloh, 274f.
- Buford, John, 311
- Buford, Gen., N. P., opposed by Grant, 311
- Bull Run, 31, 100, 135, 154, 190, 225, 246
- Burnside, Gen. Ambrose, 12, 40, 44, 99, 125, 160, 193, 215, 301, 308, 320, 340; Smith on, 221 f.; Grant and, XII; refuses commands, 246; replaces McClellan, 247; on Stanton and Halleck, 248; and Vandaligham, 249; in peril, 250ff.; Dana on, 251; Halleck and, 251f.; Congress thanks, 253; in conflict with Meade, 255ff.; Meade demands relief of, 262; censured, 263; vindicated, 263ff.; asks relief, 265; Grant on, 266
- Burton, 151
- Butler, Benjamin, 99, 149, 202, 207, 243, 339; on Halleck, 151; issues "woman order", 153, 171; Grant and, IX; Lyman on, 167f.; early days of, 168ff.; feels for the Union, 169f.; at New Orleans, 170ff.; as exchange commissioner, 172ff.; Beauregard defeats, 176; military inventions of, 177; and Ft. Fisher, 177ff.; relieved by Grant, 177, 180f., 209; reacts to dismissal, 182; exonerated, 183; later attitude toward Grant, 183f.; political activity of, 185; and Grant reconciled, 186;

- knows of Grant's drunkenness, 186; refuses vice-presidency, 186f.; Dana's tribute to, 187f.; W. F. Smith on, 189, 222; at Richmond, 203; Meigs and Barnard on, 204; in conflict with Smith, 208f.; Lyman on, 212f.; cows Grant, 214; intoxicates Grant, 216; offered Grant's command, 308
- Cadwallader, S., 43
- Cairo, 95, 230
- Cameron, Don, 108
- Cameron, Simon, 134, 186, 187; Sherman and, 269f.
- Campbell, Capt. A. P., 118
- Campbell, John A., 329
- Canby, Gen., 218
- Carpenter, F. B., 321, 340f.
- Cedar Creek, 119; credit for victory at, 121, 125
- Cemetery Ridge, 30
- Century Magazine, The*, 94
- Chaffee, Gen. A. R., 146f.
- Champion Hill, 62, 102
- Chancellorsville, 31, 106, 161
- Chase, Salmon P., 158; on Halleck, 148, 165
- Chattanooga, 8, 12, 15, 33, 65, 71, 90, 94, 95, 109, 133, 142, 189, 195, 219, 221, 222; critical situation at, 196f., 250f., 283
- Chicago Tribune, The*, 326
- Chickamauga, 1, 8, 12, 15, 20, 66, 90, 112, 115, 122, 142, 195, 221
- Chickasaw Bayou, Sherman at, 61
- City Queen, The*, 296f.
- Cleburne, Patrick, 17
- Clinton, 63
- Cold Harbor, 37, 40, 46, 93, 203, 204, 217, 218, 219, 320, 321; Franklin on, 205
- Columbus, invested by Wilson, 145
- Comstock, Gen. C. B., 46; influences Grant, 93f.; on Smith's dismissal, 217
- Conkling, Roscoe, 108
- Coppee, 41; on Thomas, 5
- Corinth, 7, 9, 12, 61, 89, 157, 289
- Corse, Gen., 127, 302
- Couch, Gen., 31, 194
- Cox, Gen. J. B., 17
- Cox, Mary B., 185
- Crittenden, 8, 291
- Crocker, Gen. M. M., 100
- Crook, Gen. George, 132; Hayes on, 120f.; on Sheridan, 121
- Cropsey, Edward, on Grant and Meade, 41f.; expelled by Meade, 42
- Crump's Landing, 59
- Cullom, Shelby B., 76
- Culpepper, 39
- Curtis, Gen., 113, 243
- Custer, Gen. George A., 51, 132, 136, 150
- Dalton, 66, 67
- Dana, Charles A., 44, 50, 86, 93, 189, 197, 286; on Thomas and Grant, 7; on Chickamauga, 8f., 9f.; on Meade, 42f., 46, 145; on McPherson, 61, 65; on Rawlins, 81f., 95; witnesses Grant's intemperance, 85; on Logan, 101f.; on Sheridan, 119f.; as writer, 146; pays tribute to Butler, 187; on W. F. Smith, 199f., 201, 219f., 222; on Butler, 209; on Butler and Grant, 214; on McClelland, 237; disagrees with Grant, 238; on Burnside, 251; on Sherman, 299; Lincoln influenced by reports of, 309; on morale in Washington, 325
- Davis, Jefferson, 4, 169, 195, 250, 297; relieves Johnston, 67f.; captured, 145; and Butler, 166, 171, 173; on Shiloh, 274; and peace overtures, 331
- Dawes, H. L., 186
- Dayton, Arthur, 6n.
- Decatur, 68
- Defoe, Gen., 127
- De Forrest, John W., 117
- Delafield, Gen. Richard, 178
- Dodge, Gen. Grenville M., 46, 49, 69, 302; and Rawlins, 97; and Logan, 105f.
- Donelson, Fort, 23, 33, 53, 80, 99, 109, 148, 156, 163, 222, 226, 246, 288, 306; McPherson at, 58, 61, 71; Halleck and, 153, 271
- Doughty, Lieut. Jacob, 257
- Douglas, Stephen A., 100, 169, 229, 303
- Duane, Major, 254
- Early, Gen. Jubal A., 47, 48, 117;

- Sheridan defeats, 118; Wright's role in defeating, 121; threatens Washington, 322f.; retires safely, 324; importance of threat by, 325
- Elements of Military Art and Science*, 151
- Ewell, Gen. Richard S., 4, 127f.
- Ewing, Hugh B., 299
- Ewing, Thomas, 267, 270
- Farragut, Adm. David, 3, 5, 170, 181
- Ferreo, Gen., at Petersburg, 256, 259
- Fink & Dittoe, III, 112
- Fish, Hamilton, 132
- Fisher, Fort, 177f., 190
- Five Forks, 40; Sheridan at, 125f., 224
- Florence, 17
- Foote, Commodore, 148
- Foote, Solomon, 215
- Forney, John W., 320
- Forrest, Gen. Nathan B., 99; routed by Wilson, 145
- Forsythe, Gen. James W., 122
- Fort(s), see DONELSON, FISHER, HENRY, HUDSON, SUMTER
- Foster, Gen., 253
- Fox, Gustavus, 26, 178, 179, 228f.
- Franklin, 17
- Franklin, Gen. W. B., 156, 185, 192, 193, 194, 202, 205, 211; Smith on, 221; and Burnside, 248
- Fredericksburg, 40, 125, 132, 160, 193; Burnside repulsed at, 245, 247f.
- Frémont, Gen. John C., 113, 152, 243, 269, 291, 326; Smith on, 220; tragedy of, 225
- French, Gen., 32
- From Chattanooga to Petersburg*, 217
- Fry, Gen. James B., 301
- Gallatin Democrat and Illinois Advertiser*, 226
- Garfield, James A., 99, 108, 184
- Germana Ford, 39
- Gettysburg, 8, 30, 32, 37, 99, 112, 194, 319
- Gibbes, Wade H., 132, 134
- Gibbon, John, 37
- Gillmore, Gen. Q. A., 114, 136, 175, 176
- Glendale, 31
- Golden Gate, The*, 57, 134
- Gordon, G. H., 183, 184
- Granger, Gordon, 13
- Grant, Jesse, R., 305n.
- Grant, Gen. Ulysses S., 13, 33, 102, 150; and Thomas, I; at Shiloh, 7, 58f., 272f.; and Sherman, 7; and Rosecrans, 9; Thomas's treatment of, 10f.; Thomas refuses to obey orders of, 12ff., 19ff.; on battle of Chattanooga, 15; on Thomas and Schofield, 18; promotes Thomas, 27; and Meade, II; smothers Meade, 30; Meade on, 33, 34f.; on Meade, 34; friction between Meade and, 34f.; Lyman on, 35; on Meade's temper, 36; Young on, 36; on Army of Potomac, 37, 318; supplants Meade, 38, 45; on Ingalls, 38f.; and Washburne, 40; co-operates with Meade, 40; Sheridan depends on, 41; Cropsey on Meade and, 41f.; on Sheridan's advancement, 48; appraised by Meade, 49; passes over Meade, 52; and McPherson, III; on Wallace, 60; relieves McClernand, 62; on McPherson, 71, 72; and Rawlins, IV; Rawlins on drinking by, 79f., 91, 95f.; on Rawlins, 86; Rawlins on, 88f.; and Presidency in 1864, 91f., 312; Rawlins on emotions of, 93; refuses to treat with Lee, 96f.; appoints Rawlins War Secretary, 98; and Logan, V; as colonel, 101; promotes Logan, 101; on Vicksburg, 103; on Sherman, Logan, and Howard, 106; and Sheridan, VI; on Sheridan, 111, 131; as devoid of military ambition, 111f.; supports Sheridan, 116, 119; and Sheridan at Petersburg, 122f.; plans to crush Lee, 123; on Lee's precarious position, 127; on Sheridan's pursuit of Lee, 128; on advancing Sheridan, 130; *Memoirs* of, 130, 339; and third term, 131; on Mackenzie, 132; Wilson joins, 136; Wilson appraises, 137; with Rawlins and Wilson at Vicksburg, 139f.; on expelling British from continent, 146; and Halleck, VIII; in conflict with Halleck, 154f.; threatens to resign, 157; Halleck supports, 161; and Butler, IX;

- Butler refuses to succeed, 172; and prisoner exchange, 174f.; relieves Butler, 180f., 209; Butler's later feeling toward, 184; Butler's knowledge of drunkenness of, 186; at Chattanooga, 198; as demanding W. F. Smith's promotion, 201; on Peninsula campaign, 203; dismisses W. F. Smith, 212f.; Butler cows, 214; Smith on drinking by, 215f., 285f.; and McClelland, XI; disagrees with McClelland over Vicksburg, 230f.; on McClelland, 239; reasons for dismissing McClelland, 240f.; McClelland's criticism of, 242f.; and Burnside, XII; relieves Burnside's peril, 250f.; at Petersburg, 256f.; on cause of Petersburg crater fiasco, 263f.; on Burnside, 266; and Sherman, XIII; early days of Sherman and, 268f.; on Sherman at Shiloh, 276f.; persuaded by Sherman not to resign, 278f.; Sherman's opinion of, 279; Sherman opposes Vicksburg plan of, 280f.; on military strategy, 282f.; advised by Sherman, 288f.; Badeau on, 292; Sherman on generalship of, 295; elevates Sherman, 299f.; Sherman acquires house of, 300; on Sherman's *Memoirs*, 300f.; refused Sherman's help to third term, 301; and Lincoln, XIV; on trading with enemy, 304f.; countermands Lincoln's permits, 305f.; in critical position after Shiloh, 307; has Lincoln's confidence at Vicksburg, 309; congratulated by Lincoln, 310; meets Lincoln, 314f.; forecasts Virginia battles, 318f.; and defense of Washington, 323f.; boomed for Presidency against Lincoln, 326f.; and Hampton Roads conference, 330; Lee asks interview with, 332; refused peace role by Lincoln, 332; accepts Robert Lincoln on staff, 334f.; invites Lincoln to City Point, 335f., 341; on Lincoln, 338; Lincoln's opinion of, 339; Lincoln's trust in, 340
- Grant & Ward, 301
- Hackelman, Gen. 307
- Hale, Dr. J. S., 3
- Halleck, Gen. Henry W., 7, 19, 23, 26, 31, 60, 81, 223, 262, 289, 298, 301, 306, 308, 316, 324, 325, 340; on removing Thomas, 20; on relieving Meade, 33; Meade subordinated to, 51; and McPherson, 55, 58; and Sheridan, 114, 115; Grant and, VIII; weakness of, 148f.; early days of, 150f.; Butler on, 151; and Sherman, 153, 270f.; in conflict with Grant, 154f.; Lincoln and, 158f.; and McClelland, 159f., 270; ignored by Hooker, 160f.; opposes Grant's plans, 162; on the draft, 163; transferred, 163f.; Sherman's opinion of, 165; and W. F. Smith, 201; on relieving Butler, 209; Smith on, 220; opposes McClelland's Vicksburg plan, 230, 233, 235; relieves McClelland, 247; Burnside on, 248; on Burnside, 251; in charge at Shiloh, 277; on Sherman's fitness, 290; revokes Grant's order against Jews, 305; ordered to field by Lincoln, 307; Lincoln on, 309; and defense of Washington, 323
- Halleck, Peachy and Billings, 152, 165
- Hamilton, Schuyler, 164
- Hamlin, Hannibal, 186
- Hampton Roads, peace conference at, 329
- Hancock, Gen., 33, 40, 45, 48, 145, 150, 206, 207, 256, 302; on court of inquiry for Burnside, 263
- Hardee, Col., 133, 135
- Hardee's Tactics*, 133
- Hawkins, Major J. P., 60
- Hay, John, 158, 333n., 340; on Sheridan, 130f.
- Hayes, Rutherford B., 126; on Logan, 99f.; on Sheridan and Crook, 120f.
- Haynes Bluff, 231
- Hazen, Gen. William B., on McPherson, 54; at Chattanooga, 198
- Henderson, on Confederate officers, 5
- Henry, Fort, 80, 226, 271, 306
- Hesseltine, 128f.
- Hewitt, Dr., 70
- Hilton Head, 139
- Hitchcock, Gen. E. A., 152n.
- Hoar, Sen. George F., 130, 217; on Butler, 166

- Hoffman, Mary, and McPherson, 73f.  
 Holly Springs, 138  
 Holmes, Oliver W., 171  
 Holmes, Oliver W., Jr., 321  
 Hood, Gen. John B., 1, 16, 18ff., 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 54, 67, 69, 94, 107, 112, 145, 150, 163, 294; and Thomas, 3; invades Tennessee, 17; defeated at Nashville, 19; succeeds Johnston, 68; on McPherson's death, 72  
 Hooker, Gen. Joseph, 15, 31, 136, 150, 194, 243, 247, 308, 320, 340; Meade succeeds, 31; and Grant, 90; opposes Howard, 106; Halleck and, 160f.; at Chattanooga, 195, 198f.; dismissed by Burnside and replaced by Lincoln, 248  
 Hooper, Miss, 131  
 Horseshoe Ridge, 1, 8  
 Hough, Col. Alfred L., 28  
 Hovey, Gen., 309  
 Howard, Gen. O. O., 45, 64, 169, 302; succeeds Logan, 103; on Sherman and Grant, 284f.  
 Hudson, Fort, 161  
 Humphreys, Gen., 146  
 Hunter, Gen. David, 47, 137, 153, 243; Early defeats, 322  
 Hunter, R. M., 329, 330  
 Hurlbut, Gen., 66, 304  
 Hurlbut, Mary Emma, 87ff.
- Independent, The*, 44  
 Ingalls, Rufus, 125; Grant on, 38f.  
 Iuka, 9, 89, 307
- Jackson, Andrew, McClelland on, 226  
 Jackson, Thomas J., 150, 190, 237  
 Jenkins, Alexander M., 100  
 Johnson, Andrew, 28, 183, 299  
 Johnson, Robert Underwood, 94  
 Johnston, Gen. Albert Sidney, 149; at Shiloh, 272; death of, 273  
 Johnston, Gen. Joseph E., 16, 30, 50, 54, 62, 66, 112, 135, 149, 192; relieved by Davis, 67f.; Grant plans to smash, 123f., 293; terms of surrender for, 297; at Sherman's funeral, 302  
 Jomini, Henri, 151  
 Jones, Russell, on Grant's lack of political ambition, 312
- Juárez, 129  
 Kearny, Gen. Stephen W., 267  
 Kenesaw Mountain, 67f.  
 Kershaw, Gen., 127  
 Kilpatrick, Gen. Judson, 142f., 184  
 Kittoe, Dr. Edward, 77
- Lamon, Ward, 306, 307, 310, 327n.  
 Lawler, Gen., 161  
 Ledlie, Gen., at Petersburg crater, 257ff.; condemned for behavior, 263  
 Lee, Gen. Custis, 127  
 Lee, Henry, 5  
 Lee, Gen. Robert E., 8, 31, 33, 36, 50, 57, 78, 93, 102, 122, 123, 134, 149, 159, 162, 163, 174, 192, 193, 203, 212, 218, 219, 242, 245, 247, 250, 319, 325; attitude of, 3f., 5; escapes Meade, 31f.; Meade negotiates with, 50; Grant refuses to treat with, 96f.; Grant's plan to smash, 123f.; at Appomattox, 128; and Scott, 135; and Early, 322; as supreme commander, 330; asks interview with Grant, 332; Grant's reply to, 333  
*Lexington, The*, 151, 165  
*Life of Meade*, 32  
*Life of Stonewall Jackson*, 5  
 Lincoln, Abraham, 26, 33, 43, 45, 47, 92, 115, 138, 162, 164, 167, 170, 178, 180, 181, 250, 297; on promoting Thomas, 4; and Rosecrans, 7; dissatisfied with Meade, 32; orders Meade's promotion, 48f.; Rawlins and, 87; on Sheridan, 110; and McClelland, 137, 141, 223, 226, 228ff., 234, 236, 241f., 243f.; and role at Vicksburg, 141; and Halleck, 158f.; and McClelland, 160; asks Butler to be vice-president, 186f.; and William Scott, 191f.; on Virginia campaign, 193f.; petitioned to promote W. F. Smith, 201f.; approves Butler's demotion, 211; in Smith-Butler controversy, 213f.; military blunders of, 237; replaces McClelland, 247; Burnside to, 248; promotes Hooker, 248; on Vandaligham, 249; anxious over Burnside, 252; levity of, 253, 309f., 317, 336; on court of inquiry for

- Burnside, 263; Grant and, XIV; revokes Grant's order on Jews, 305; as critical of Shiloh, 306f.; early neglect of Grant, 307ff.; offers Butler Grant's command, 308; has confidence in Grant at Vicksburg, 309; congratulates Grant for Vicksburg, 310; on Grant's political ambitions, 312; meets Grant, 314ff.; offers campaign plan, 316; disclaims military knowledge, 317; asks Grant to defend Washington, 323; on Grant as candidate, 326f.; distrusts Grant in 1864 election, 328f.; sets peace terms, 329f.; refuses Grant right to negotiate peace, 332f.; puts son on Grant's staff, 334f.; at City Point, 335ff., 341; at Petersburg, 337; death of, 338; Grant on, 338; trusts in Grant 340
- Lincoln, Robert T., 334f.
- Little Round Top, 126
- Locke, David R., 339n.
- Logan, Gen. John A., 64, 69, 86, 134, 213, 224, 301, 302, 309, 311; magnanimity of, 26, 107; Grant and, V; Hayes on, 99f.; Blaine on, 100; promoted by Grant, 101; Dana on, 101f.; succeeds McPherson, 103; Thomas opposed to, 104; in tribute to Sherman, 105; defends Grant, 107f.; helps Grant on third term, 108, 301; as Blaine's running-mate, 108; as father of Memorial Day, 109; on Grant and Sherman, 293
- Longstreet, Gen. James, 8, 12, 150, 333n.; at Chickamauga, 195, 250, 283; repulsed by Burnside, 245, 253; and peace overtures, 331f.
- Louisiana, *The*, 178f.
- Lowell Institute, 151
- Lyman, Col. Theodore, 44; on Grant, 35; on Butler, 167f.; on Smith and Butler, 212f.
- Lyon, Capt. Nathaniel, 268
- Mackenzie, Ranald S., 132
- Maddox, Joseph, 305
- Mahan, D. H. on McPherson, 54f.
- Manassas, 160
- Marcy, Gen. Randolph B., 156, 327
- Martindale, Gen., 212
- Maximilian, in Mexico, 128f., 146
- McClellan, Gen. George B., 29, 31, 57, 135, 136, 137, 153, 158, 159, 189, 192, 202, 237, 243, 245, 263, 270, 291, 308, 316, 319, 321, 326, 340; ordered to withdraw from Richmond, 148; on Halleck, 149, 165; and Halleck and Stanton, 152; and Grant, 155f.; and Fernando Wood, 192f.; Smith on, 221; Burnside as intimate of, 246; replaced by Lincoln, 247; asked by Lincoln to withdraw as presidential candidate, 327; Grant refuses to oppose, 329
- McClermand, Gen., 83, 99, 100, 134, 138ff., 161, 213, 282, 309, 339; on Vicksburg, 62; and Lincoln, 137, 140, 141, 223, 226ff., 228ff.; in conflict with Wilson, 141; Grant and, XI; opposition to, 225; early days of, 225f.; at Donelson and Shiloh, 226f.; Porter and Grant forestall, 230ff., 280; supersedes Sherman, 232f.; Dana on, 237; Dana criticizes, 238
- McClure, Col. Alexander, in 1864 elections, 328
- McCook, Daniel, 134, 267
- McCook, Gen. A. D., 291; at Stone River, 8; at Chickamauga, 115
- McCreery, 134
- McDowell, 135, 326
- McFarland, 133
- McMillan, Dr., 83
- McPherson, Gen. James B., 33, 36, 84, 100, 103, 106, 112, 139, 150, 273, 282, 290, 293, 309; Grant and, III; early life of, 54f.; analyzes Civil War, 56; and Alexander, 56; and Wilson, 57, 134ff.; at Shiloh, 59; Sherman on, 60f.; Dana on, 61; at Vicksburg, 61ff.; at Jackson, 62; at Clinton, 63; promoted, 65; death of, 69ff.; and Mary Hoffman, 73f.; Logan succeeds, 103; Grant thanks, 287f.
- Meade, Gen. George G., 11, 27, 126, 161, 167, 201, 215, 217, 245, 300, 319, 320, 325, 340; Grant and, II; succeeds Hooker, 31; Lincoln dis-

Burnside, Thomas (Ted) 335

Irwin



- satisfied with, 32; on Grant, 33, 34f.; friction between Grant and, 34; as ill-tempered, 35f.; Grant on supplanting, 38; Grant co-operates with, 40; Sheridan's attitude toward, 41; as envious of Grant, 41; Cropsey on Grant and, 41f.; in difficulty with press, 43ff.; asks Burnside's relief, 262; censured for Petersburg crater fiasco, 264f.; in election of, 1864, 329
- Medill, Joseph, on Grant, as candidate, 326
- Meigs, Gen. Montgomery C., 204
- Men Who Saved the Union*, 293
- Merrill, 185
- Merritt, Gen. Wesley, 134; and Wilson, 143
- Mexico, Sheridan in, 129
- Millikin's Bend, 139
- Mill Springs, 12
- Mine Run, 32, 45
- Missionary Ridge, 1, 12, 13f.
- Missouri Democrat, The*, 240
- Miss Ravenel's Conversion*, 117
- Mobile, 3, 162
- Monterey, 31
- Montgomery, 145
- Mumford, 170
- Murfreesboro, 1, 8, 12, 114, 121
- Mussel Shoals, 17
- Nasby, Petroleum V., 339
- Nashville, 1, 3
- Nelson, 273, 274
- New Almaden Quicksilver Mine, 152
- Newman, John P., 305n.
- New Orleans, 3
- New York Express, The*, 136
- New York Herald, The*, 43, 134, 326
- New York Sun, The*, 181, 187
- New York Times, The*, 43
- New York Tribune, The*, 269
- New York World, The*, 181
- Nicolay, John G., 158, 333n.
- Official Records of the War of the Rebellion*, 333
- Oglesby, Gen., 307
- Orchard Knob, 13
- Ord, Gen. E. O. C., 50, 128, 260; on Petersburg crater, 259; and peace overtures, 331f.
- Ould, Robert, 173
- Paducah, 79
- Palmer, Gen. John M., 24; on Sheridan, 121f.
- Parke, Gen., 251, 255
- Parker, Capt. Ely S., 78, 144
- Parton, James, 183
- Patterson, Bettsy, 113
- Peach Tree Creek, 16, 54
- Pea Ridge, 113
- Pemberton, 62, 102, 280
- Pennypacker, 32, 43
- Perryville, 114
- Petersburg, 44, 46, 50, 95; Sheridan at, 122; W. F. Smith at, 206f.
- Petersburg crater, 40, 219; disaster at, 254ff.; blame for disaster at, 263ff.
- Philadelphia Inquirer, The*, 41
- Piatt, 24, 293; on Grant, 2
- Pickett, Gen. George E., 30, 150; defeated at Five Forks, 125f.
- Pierpont, Francis Harrison, 316
- Pleasants, Lieut. Col., 254
- Political and Military Life of Napoleon*, 151
- Poore, Ben Perley, 299n.
- Pope, Gen. John, 7, 148, 158, 159, 164, 225; Lee attacks, 160
- Porter, Admiral David D., 178, 181; and Grant and Vicksburg, 223, 228, 230ff., 237, 280; on McClelland, 232f.; on Sherman's surrender terms, 297n.; on Lincoln at City Point, 336
- Porter, Fitz-John, 11, 43, 51, 71, 119, 120, 123, 189; Smith on, 221; tragedy of, 225
- Porter, General Horace, 134, 180, 261, 302; on Petersburg crater, 257, 259; on Sherman, 295
- Port Gibson, 140
- Port Royal, 136
- Potter, 254; at Petersburg crater, 257f.
- Prentiss, 273
- Pulaski, Fort, 136
- Rapidan River, 37, 39, 47, 66, 143, 254, 293, 320
- Rappahannock River, 160
- Rawlins, Gen. John A., 11, 13f., 39, 46, 85, 88, 102, 125, 184, 202, 206, 216, 241, 281, 285, 304; at Shiloh,

- 59f.; at Vicksburg, 63, 81, 139f.; on McPherson's death, 71; on Grant's drinking, 79f., 91, 95f.; Dana on, 81f.; writes Grant on drinking, 84; on paroling prisoners, 86; as victim of tuberculosis, 87; on Grant, 88f.; and Rosecrans, 90; on Grant and Presidency in 1864, 91f.; offers to withdraw, 92; loses influence, 93; opposes Sherman, 94; Sherman on, 94f.; appointed War Secretary, 98; death of, 98; opposes Grant, 123; on Sheridan, 127; and Wilson, 138; Wilson's biography of, 146; advises Grant, 289f.
- Raymond, 63
- Reed, Thomas B., 118
- Reese, Sgt. Henry, 257
- Report on the Means of National Defense*, 151
- Resaca, 66, 67
- Reynolds, Gen., 31
- Rice, 317
- Richmond, 37, 38, 143, 158, 163, 175, 187, 193, 203, 212, 237, 289; Sheridan enters, 117; McClellan at, 148, 159; Lincoln urges Grant to take, 315f.
- Richmond Examiner, The*, 144; on Butler, 172
- River Queen, The*, 329, 330, 335
- Rosecrans, Gen. William S., 1, 99, 114, 121, 135, 142, 210, 249, 283, 338; supersedes Buell, 7; at Chickamauga, 8, 9, 89f., 250; Grant supersedes, 9; Rawlins on Grant and, 89; at Chattanooga, 195f.; Smith on, 221
- Rowley, Col. William R., 43, 78
- Sailor's Creek, 4; Sheridan at, 127f.
- Schofield, Gen. John M., 16, 17f., 22, 25, 66, 68, 69, 73, 104, 106, 112, 132, 290, 302; on McPherson's death, 72; on Sherman's generalship, 295
- Scott, Robert N., 301
- Scott, Thomas A., 148
- Scott, William, 191
- Scott, Gen. Winfield, 3, 5, 152, 158, 164
- Sedgwick, John, 40, 49, 161; Warren and, 144
- Selma, 132, 145
- Seward, William H., 313, 332; and Maximilian, 129; at peace conference, 329, 330
- Shaffer, Col. J. W., 214
- Sheridan, Gen. Philip H., 13, 27, 28, 40, 47, 50, 132, 142, 144, 145, 146, 150, 218, 256, 302; Meade on advancement of, 48; as lieutenant-general, 52, 129, 300; and Grant, VI; Grant on, 111, 131; suspended at West Point, 112; early career of, 112ff.; and Halleck, 114; at Murfreesboro, 114; and Army of Potomac, 115; Meade in conflict with, 116f.; attacks Early, 117f.; and Dana, 119f.; and Crook, 120f.; and Wright, 121; and Grant at Petersburg, 122f.; assigned role to crush Lee, 123; at Five Forks, 126f.; on Lee's precarious position, 127; at Sailor's Creek, 127f.; Grant and Lee and, 128; in Mexico, 129; *Memoirs of*, 130; at Republican convention, 131; and Wilson, 143; and threat to Washington, 324; in election of 1864, 329
- Sherman, Sen. John, 4, 232, 270, 277, 296, 299
- Sherman, Gen. T. W., 136
- Sherman, Gen. W. T., 6, 12, 15, 16, 27, 28, 30, 33, 34, 35, 36, 44, 66, 83, 84, 92, 122, 123, 132, 135, 139, 142f., 145, 149, 157, 159, 164, 183, 209, 218, 223, 227, 250f., 307, 309, 337; and Thomas, 4f., 18, 199; and McPherson, 55, 60f., 67; on Shiloh, 58f., 273ff.; at Chickasaw, 61; at Jackson, 62; promoted, 65; on McPherson's death, 73; Rawlins opposes, 94; on Rawlins, 94f.; promotes Logan, 103; demotes Logan, 104; Logan's tribute to, 105; assigned role to crush Lee, 124; as General of Army, 129; *Memoirs of*, 130; with Wilson and Rawlins at Vicksburg, 139f.; on Halleck, 153, 165, 270f.; Smith on, 220; and Grant and Porter at Vicksburg, 231f.; McClelland supersedes,

- 232f.; Grant and, XIII; early career of, 267ff.; and Cameron, 269f.; on C. F. Smith, 271f.; Halleck asks promotion of, 276; Grant on, 276f.; persuades Grant not to resign, 278f.; on Grant, 279; opposes Grant's Vicksburg plan, 280f.; Howard on Grant and, 284f.; Grant thanks, 287f.; advises Grant, 288f.; estimate of, 291f.; Logan on, 293; captures Atlanta, 294; shows lack of generalship, 294f.; on Grant's leadership, 295; refuses advancement, 296; states terms of surrender, 297; reviled, 297; on Stanton and Halleck, 298f.; rebuffs Stanton, 299; elevated by Grant, 299f.; acquires Grant's house, 300; Grant on *Memoirs* of, 300f.; embarrassed by letter to Scott, 301; refuses to help Grant on third term, 301; offers to assist Grant, 302; last days of, 302
- Shiloh, 9, 80, 99, 109, 157, 222, 303, 306; Grant and Thomas at, 7; McPherson at, 58, 71; McClellan at, 227; Grant at, 272ff.; Lincoln as critical of, 306f.
- Shubrick, Commodore, 151
- Sickles, Gen. Daniel E., 99
- Sigel, Gen. Franz, 243
- Singleton, Gen. James W., 305
- Slocum, Gen. Henry W., 112, 302
- Slocum, Lydia, 72
- Smith, Gen. C. F., 33, 153f.; at Shiloh, 58; Grant and, 155, 271f.
- Smith, Caleb, 245
- Smith, Gen. John C., 193
- Smith, Kirby, 128
- Smith, Robert, 54
- Smith, Gen. William F., 12, 36, 150, 175f., 181, 186; at Chattanooga, 15; at Cold Harbor, 46, 204ff.; Wilson's biography of, 146; Grant and, X; on Butler, 189; early life of, 189f.; and McClellan and Wood, 192f.; appeals to Lincoln, 193f.; and Rosecrans, 195; plans to ford Tennessee, 197f.; fails of promotion, 202; at Petersburg, 206f.; in conflict with Butler, 208f.; advises Grant, 210f.; dismissed, 212; denies deceit, 215; on Grant's drinking, 215, 285; Comstock on dismissal of, 217; Wilson on, 219; Dana on, 219f.; on Thomas, 220; on Halleck, 220; on Buell, McClellan, Porter, Franklin, Rosecrans, and Burnside, 221; on Grant, 222; and Burnside, 248
- Snake Creek Gap, 16
- Spirit of the Times*, 184
- Spottsylvania Court House, 38, 132
- Sprague, Gov., 159
- Stanley, Gen. D. S., on Sherman, 294f.
- Stanton, Edwin M., 8, 19, 26, 27, 45, 50, 81, 90, 138, 142, 162, 163, 164, 173, 180, 181, 213, 234, 247, 265, 283, 291, 306, 315, 330, 332, 337; and Grant, 9; on Thomas, 10, 20; on Meade, 43; and Sheridan, 115; and New Almaden Quicksilver case, 152; threatens to arrest W. F. Smith, 195; praises W. F. Smith, 200; arrests Stone, 225; rebukes Dana, 238; McClellan complains to, 242; refuses McClellan an inquiry, 242f.; Burnside on, 248; on court of inquiry for Burnside, 263; on Sherman's surrender terms, 298; Sherman rebuffs, 299; advises Grant to cancel Lincoln's permits, 306; advises Grant to keep plans secret, 316
- Staples, John S., 333
- Steele, 290, 309
- Stephens, Alexander, 329, 330
- Stephens, Isaac P., 76
- Stone, Gen. C. P., 224f.
- Stone River, see MURFREESBORO
- Stuart, Gen. James E., 116f.
- Sumner, Charles, 135, 184; attacks Grant, 107
- Sumter, Fort, 76, 134, 170
- Swett, Leonard, 307
- Swinton, William, 203n., 206n.; expelled, 44
- Taylor, Zachary, 31, 35
- Terrill, James B., 114n.
- Terrill, William H., 114n.
- Terrill, William R., 112, 114n.
- Terry, Gen. A. H., 180
- Thayer, 193

- Thomas, Gen. George H., 66, 69, 89, 90, 94, 99, 103, 106, 115, 130, 133, 135, 145, 150, 196, 218, 251, 283, 287, 290, 300; and Grant, I; and Hood, 3; and Sherman, 4; and Bragg, 6; supersedes Buell, 7; at Stone River and Chickamauga, 8f.; treatment of Grant, 10f.; refuses to obey Grant, 12, 19ff., 107; on Sherman's march, 17; and Schofield, 18; Halleck on removing, 20; promoted, 27; at San Francisco, 28; objects to Logan, 104, 106; and Smith, 199f.; Smith on, 220
- Thomas, Lorenzo, 155, 269
- Thompson, A. C., on McPherson's death, 70
- Tigress, The*, 59, 273
- Tilden, Samuel, 244
- Torbert, Gen. Alfred, 143
- Townsend, Gen., 247
- Tucker, John, 216
- Under the Old Flag*, 146
- Upton, Gen. Emory, 132, 134, 204, 205f.
- Vallandigham, Clement L., Burnside, Lincoln, and, 249
- Vanderbilt, William, 301
- Van Dorn, Gen., 280
- Van Duzer, 27
- Van Horne, 16, 23
- Vicksburg, 23, 53, 86, 93, 95, 109, 133, 161, 308; McPherson at, 61ff., 71, 102; McClelland on, 62; Wilson and, 138ff.; Lincoln, McClelland, Grant, Porter, and, 228ff.
- Wade, Benjamin F., 183, 263; on Lincoln's levity, 309f.
- Walcott, 305n.
- Wallace, Gen. Lewis, 222, 227, 265; at Shiloh, 59f., 80f., 273; Early defeats, 322
- Wallace, W. H. L., 273
- Ward, Artemus, 339
- Warren, Gen. G. K., 40, 49; relieved, 126; and Sedgwick, 144; tragedy of, 224
- Washburne, Elihu, 43, 76f., 92, 168, 183n., 184, 189, 296, 305n., 310, 312
- Webster, Gen., 304
- Weed, Thurlow, 193
- Weitzel, Gen. Theodore, 178ff., 183
- Welles, Gideon, 32, 131, 148, 158, 181, 337f.; on Rawlins, 87; on Halleck, 149, 160; on Grant at White House, 313
- Whiting, William H., 190
- Wilcox, Gen., 134, 252, 257
- Wilderness, 37, 39, 66, 143
- Wilkes, George, 184
- Wilson, Henry, 306
- Wilson, Gen. James H., 10, 13f., 17, 19, 21, 22, 24, 63, 82, 84, 85, 93, 94, 95, 122, 202, 208n., 241, 281, 286, 299; on Thomas and Grant, 7; on Chattanooga, 15; on McPherson, 57, 134f.; at Raymond, 63; on Rawlins, 76; and Grant's abstinence, 80; at Vicksburg, 81, 133, 138ff.; as Rawlins's biographer, 98; and Grant, VII; early life of, 132f.; and Scott, 135; joins Grant, 136; opinion of Grant, 137; and Rawlins, 138; in conflict with McClelland, 141; on army morale, 141f., 144; influence of, 142; sent west, 145; cavalry raids of, 146; on expelling British, 146; as writer, 146; last days of, 146f.; and W. F. Smith, 201; in Smith-Butler controversy, 214f.; on W. F. Smith, 219; Grant's statement on McClelland to, 240; advises Grant, 290
- Wistar, Gen. Isaac J., on Butler and Grant's drinking, 216
- Wright, Gen. H. G., 47, 135, 145, 205, 211; and Early and Sheridan, 121; drives Early from Washington, 323
- Winchester Place, 118
- Wirz, Capt. Henry, 172f.
- Wise, John S., and Lee, 4
- Wood, Fernando, and McClelland, 192f.
- Wood, Gen. Thomas J., 13
- Yates, Gov., 141, 238
- Yellow Tavern, 117
- Young, John Russell, 52, 110, 130, 282; on Grant, 36
- Young's Point, 138

?

76

77

100

133

165

167

169

171

202

230

244

284

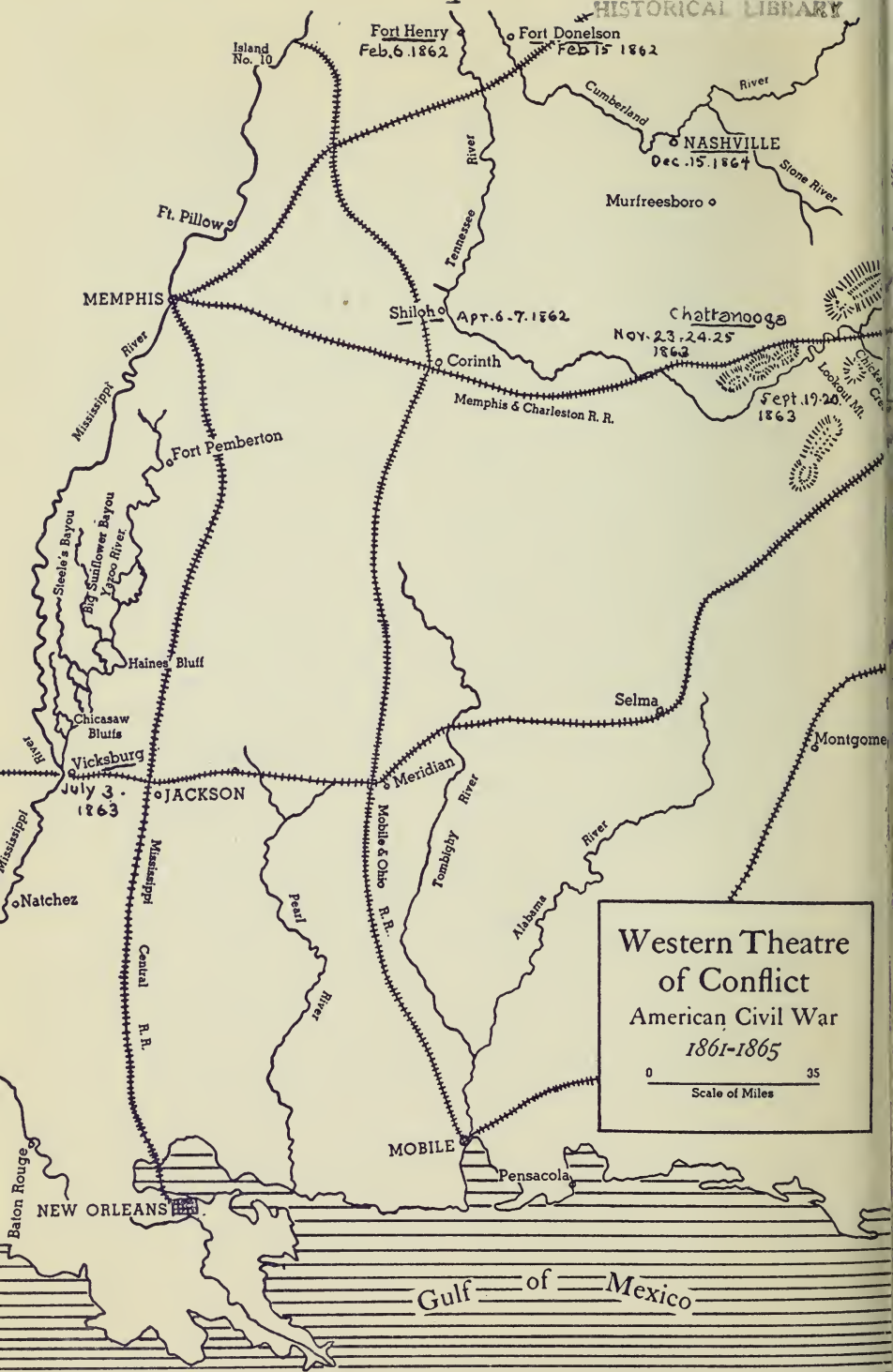
296

308

320

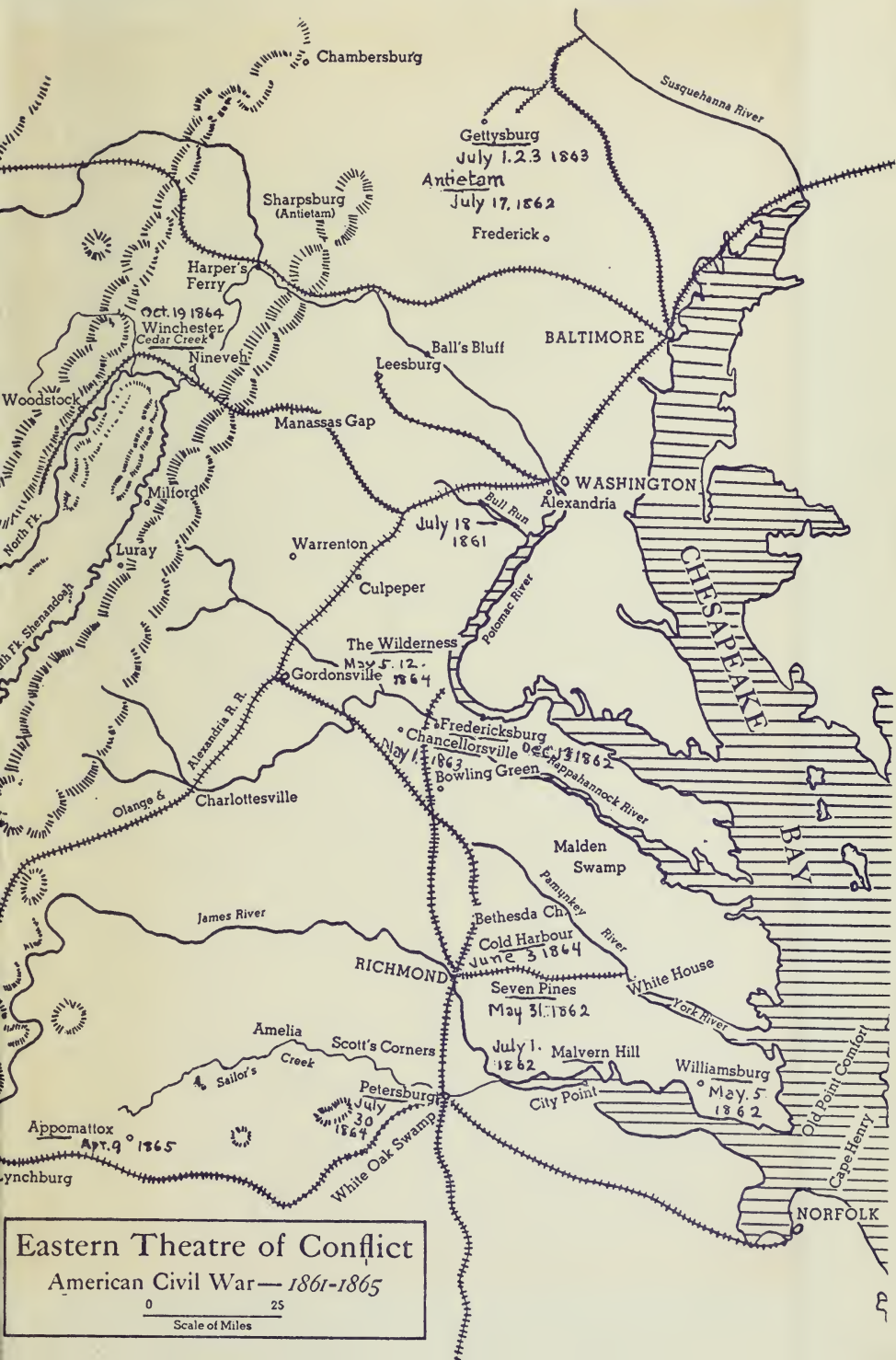
343

367



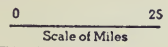
Western Theatre  
of Conflict  
American Civil War  
1861-1865

0 35  
Scale of Miles



# Eastern Theatre of Conflict

American Civil War — 1861-1865



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA  
973.82G76WMA C005  
GRANT AND HIS GENERALS. NY



3 0112 025372472